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MORRIS'S  
**THE MAN BORN TO BE KING**

WITH

**Introduction, Notes, Paraphrase  
(of difficult passages) and  
Appendices.**

BY

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# INTRODUCTION.

## SECTION I.—THE POET.

WILLIAM MORRIS 1834-96.

(1) **Early Life.**—William Morris was born at Walthamstow, on March 24, 1834. His father was a wealthy

(a) **Childhood.** man, being partner in a business firm in London, and residing generally in his country house in Essex, on the border of Epping Forest. As a boy Morris loved to wander in the Epping Forest and made himself familiar with the names of birds,—a sign of the poet that he was to be.

At the age of thirteen, Morris went to school at Marlborough

(b) **At School.** College. He did not distinguish himself much in his studies or games. But he had another forest there to wander in and also made himself familiar with the churches and other buildings around him, built in the old Gothic style of architecture. This filled him with a love for the art and architecture of the Middle Ages which became one of his dreams in life to revive.

At seventeen he went to Exeter College, Oxford. He did not shine in his studies, but a few close friends

(c) **College Life.** knew how wide and deep was his knowledge on some subjects such as architecture. His chief friend at College was Edward Burne-Jones, afterwards a painter.

The heads of these young men were filled with a passion for art. They studied the works of John Ruskin (author, "*Modern Painters*", 1841-60; "*Stones of Venice*", 1851-53, etc.) Their reading only strengthened their spontaneous love and admiration for the life and art of the Middle Ages. Morris had indeed already begun to practise the several arts. He desired to revive the old Gothic ideas of life and art and was out of love with the ideas of his own time. The writings of Carlyle and Ruskin had confirmed this natural tendency.

Morris's father had died in his boy-hood. At the age of twenty-one he succeeded to a large fortune.

(d) **Travel.** In 1854 he and Burne-Jones went abroad for a tour in Northern France and Belgium, where they saw the greatest works of Gothic architecture and the

paintings of the Middle Ages. He did not like the Renaissance School of Art, because he thought they led the way to the dull materialism and heartless industrialism of his own age. He wanted to go back to the feudal times that preceded the Reformation and the Renaissance. His mother had wished him to study for the Church, but he determined to carry out his ideas of art.

(2) **Morris's View of Art.**—In Morris's view, art was everybody's business, whether he was an artist or not. In this he thought like Ruskin. By "art" they did not mean pictures or statues only. Morris thought little of these things. But he thought of art as bearing upon the work and crafts of ordinary people. As regards these crafts his opinion was that these things were made in a much more beautiful manner in the Middle Ages. But these same things, in the opinion of Morris, were being made in an ugly manner in his own days.

(3) **Morris as a Social Reformer.**—That ugliness in workmanship he saw all around him,—in house-building, in chairs and tables, in cups and saucers, in clothes, in fact, in everything. At first he tried to make beautiful things for himself, but gradually he saw that there was something in the condition of the society of his time that favoured ugliness. He felt it necessary to try and remove it. Thus in the end he became a poet and reformer. He began to dream that he would reconstruct society so as to promote the reign of beauty. He discovered that "beauty was a symptom of happy work and ugliness of unhappy work." This convinced him that there was a "new kind of unhappiness" which troubled society, the effect of which was seen in the ugliness of all that this society made. Society, therefore, he proposed to reform. At last he took up those views of social, political, and economic reform which are called "*Socialism*".

(4) **Morris as a Designer**—In his love of art Morris took upon himself a double task. The first of the two which he pursued with great ardour and consistency throughout his life was the art of the architect and decorator, including in the latter term sculpture, painting, designing and artistic production of metal-work, wood-work and glass-work, paper-hangings, carpets, tapestry-work, tiles and furniture, the dyeing and designing and embroidering of all kinds of cloth, etc. This was his principal profession in life. Soon

after leaving Oxford, he founded, in partnership with his University friends and the romantic poet, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the firm of Morris and Company, manufacturers and decorators. In the end he became the sole proprietor of this firm (1875). After his marriage with Miss Jane Burden in April 1859, soon after the publication of his first poem, he built for himself a new house on Bexley Heath in Kent according to his own taste and ideas. The artistic programme of Morris's firm was, as it must have been noticed, very comprehensive and by far too ambitious. But Morris, in course of time, was able to carry out a great deal of what he had promised in opening his firm. Some of his partners and sympathizers helped in designing stained glass and furniture, others in tiles and pottery, Mrs. Morris and her sister in embroidery, while Morris himself applied his genius to wall-paper and designs for hand-printing and dyeing of papers and chintzes, which became the speciality of the firm. All the production was supervised by Morris himself. In the end this decorative activity of Morris produced remarkable changes in British ideas of taste and beauty. He brought more beauty into the daily domestic life of English Society, and to a certain extent, his influence spread even to other countries.

(5) **The General Spirit and Character of his Literary Work.**—The second task which Morris took upon himself was the art of a poet, the art of making and adorning stories in prose and verse. He became famous in this art too, both as a writer in verse and a writer in prose. Telling stories or romances became his strong point in literature. Here also was seen his inclination to go back to the Middle Ages for inspiration and material as well as for language and style and manner of treatment and presentation. He also derived his inspiration from the Greek legends but poured into them a good deal of the spirit of the Middle Ages. In a word, he *romanticized* the classics, where classic (*i.e.*, Greek) sources gave him his inspiration. As will be seen, he also studied the Icelandic language and later on drew upon the sources of that literature, which was the fountain source of many of the ideas and sentiments of Western Europe in the Middle Ages. But though Morris achieved a great success by his writings, he did not consider literature as a primary, but only as a secondary vocation. His principal profession was that of a designer.

(6) **Brief Survey of Morris's Poetical Career.**

## A.—ORIGINAL POETRY.

(a) Morris's earliest poems and prose tales were written while he was at Oxford and published in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine which was started by him and his friends.

(b) In 1858, after leaving Oxford, he published a volume of poems called "The Defence of Guenevere". The subject was suggested by the well-known book of Malory called "*Morte D'Arthur*".

(c) The most important part of his career as a poet was 1865 to 1870, during which time he was in London. During this period he wrote more than 30 stories or romances in verse:—

- (1) "The Life and Death of Jason", was published in 1867. It is one of the longest of his poems. The subject was taken from the well-known Greek legend of Jason sailing in the ship Argo in quest of the Golden Fleece, his marriage with Medea, daughter of the King of Colchis, to whom the Golden Fleece belonged, and the tragedies in which Jason and his family were involved in consequence.
- (2) "The Earthly Paradise" which contains in all twenty-five tales, published 1868—70. The present poem, "The Man Born to be King," is one of the tales contained in the "Earthly Paradise".
- (3) Two years after finishing "The Earthly Paradise", Morris wrote a drama "Love is Enough"—1873. Though dramatic in form, it has the lyric spirit of a poem.

**B.—Translations.**—The next group of Morris's literary works may be called "Translations". His inspiration was now derived chiefly from Iceland. He also translated from Latin and Greek sources. Morris first began to learn Icelandic in 1860 and in 1861 he made his first attempts at translation with the help of his teacher Magnusson, and in 1871 and 1873 he visited Iceland. The chief works of this period are:—

- (1) Translations of some of the Icelandic "*Sagas*". (The *Sagas* are mythical and heroical poems of Iceland, Norway, etc., containing a mass of legendary, historical

## INTRODUCTION.

lore relating to North-western Europe and written from six to nine hundred years ago). The chief of these prose translations was that of the Volsunga Saga, made in 1871. (2) After these translations Morris published his great epic poem, "Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs" 1876. In this epic poem Morris has dressed up in his own masterly way the story of the Icelandic "Volsunga Saga," the famous epic of Northern Europe. (Morris wrote the poem in a metre of six stresses of his own invention). (3) In 1875 Morris published a translation of the Aeneid (the Latin epic poem by Virgil) in English verse. (4) In 1886-87, he translated the Odyssey (a Greek epic by Homer) into English verse, which is a greater success than his Aeneid.

(7) **Brief Survey of Morris's Prose Writings.**—At first Morris found it more difficult to write in prose than in verse—

- (a) Some of his earliest prose tales were published in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine. (b) The translation of the *Sagas* referred to in 6 B-(2) were also in prose. (c) From 1882 he began to give lectures and addresses, many of which were previously written. These were collected and published in two volumes, called "Hopes and Fears for Art" and "Signs of Change". (d) About this time he became a socialist, but from 1886 to 1896 he wrote a series of prose romances. The best known of these are "The Dream of John Bull," "News from Nowhere," and "The House of the Wolfings". "The House of the Wolfings," in which we have a mixture of prose and verse, is a story of the wars between the Goths and the Romans. The stories have a charm of their own and are like none others in English Literature. The last of these romances was "The Sundering Flood," written in the year of his death and finished a few days before his death in 1896.

(8) **Last years of his Life (Morris as a Socialist).**—From 1877 Morris began to take interest in politics. He opposed British policy in supporting Turkey against Russia in the war of 1877.

He was at first a Liberal as regards party politics. But when a Liberal Cabinet proceeded to pass the Irish Coercion Bill in 1881, he ceased to believe in "Liberalism." Gradually he drifted towards "*Socialism*." Socialism is a political creed that aims at putting an end to the inequalities of wealth and fortune. Some of the opinions of the socialists are quite revolutionary, as they do not recognize the institution of property in itself, while others merely aim at abolition of property in land only. Morris believed that the political salvation of the poor lay in "Socialism." The poetry contained in his later romances breathes the socialistic spirit in many passages. Morris joined the Social Democratic Federation, and afterwards formed a party of his own called the "Socialist League" with an organ of its own called the "Commonweal."

[Read paragraph (8) in connection with paragraph (3). These two paragraphs will enable the student to get an insight into Morris's opinions on social matters.]

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## SECTION II.

### "THE EARTHLY PARADISE."

(1) "**The Man Born to be King**" is a verse story, which though complete in itself forms part of "**The Earthly Paradise**," which was published in three volumes, 1868-70. It is the most important of Morris's poetical works. This poem illustrates in a striking manner Morris's ideas of art as applied to poetry. The whole poem is beautifully designed and skilfully constructed, richly decorated with poetical ornament inside and out, and with its Prologue and Epilogue, it becomes a fitting house for the reception of tales, which in themselves are of a very romantic cast. The key to unlock the treasures in "this house of tales" is contained in the Prologue.

(2) **Indebtedness to Chaucer.**—Morris took Chaucer frankly as his model. Chaucer was the great English poet of the Middle Ages, a contemporary of Edward III and Richard II. In taking Chaucer for his model, he was in harmony with his principles of art and poetry, which aimed at a revival of the manner and spirit

of the Middle Ages. He imitated him in spirit as well as in manner. Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" is a store-house of poetical tales, so also Morris's "Earthly Paradise" is. Chaucer's poem has a Prologue and Epilogue, so also Morris's. Chaucer borrowed the subject matter of his tales from all sources available to him—classical, mediæval, and oriental, so also is the case with Morris, Morris's Epilogue is addressed to Chaucer and is a fitting tribute to the master. In Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, the occasion for the relation of the stories is that a number of pilgrims who intend to make a pilgrimage to Canterbury (where was the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket), are assembled at the Tabbard Inn in Southark, and upon the advice of the merry landlord of the Inn who joins the pilgrim party, it is agreed that each member of the party should tell a story in turn to relieve the fatigue of the journey.

(3) **The Prologue or Introduction to "The Earthly Paradise"**—The problem that Morris solves in the "Prologue"—Half the stories in "The Earthly Paradise" are from Greek sources, and the other half are from mediæval legends or oriental sources. These latter are stories of many countries. The Greek stories are told by *living Greeks* and mediæval stories related by mediæval Christians of different European nationalities. Hence Morris had to construct a framework where Greeks of the ancient world of Europe could meet with Christians of the Middle Ages of Europe. This he has very skilfully contrived in the first story, the Prologue, the plot of which is briefly described below.

(4) **The Plot of "The Prologue"**.—The plot is as follows:—

In the autumn of 1372, while the "Black Death" was ravaging the country, a crew of sailors set out to discover among the unknown western seas an Earthly Paradise—a happy place where there is no sickness or old age or death—about the existence of which there was a tradition current in mediæval Europe. The leader of this band of emigrants was a Norseman, who had been born at Constantinople, the capital of the Greek Emperors. The party contained men of diverse nationalities, Frenchmen, Germans, etc. After many wanderings, adventures, and disappointments, the remnant of the crew came to an island in the sea, where they discover



the descendants of an ancient Greek colony, still speaking the Greek language and keeping up the Greek institutions. The colony had existed there for hundreds of years. The "Wanderers" are hospitably received by the Greeks and live the rest of their lives amongst them. It is arranged that they are to have two feasts every month and at each of them a story is to be told, first by one of the Greeks and the next by one of Wanderers, and so on alternately. Thus each month two stories are told, and twenty-four stories are told in the twelve months that follow after their arrival. The first story, told by one of the Greeks, is from a Greek source—*Atlanta's Race*. The second story at the next feast is related by one of the "Wanderers." It is "*The Man Born to be King*." Twelve stories in all are from Greek sources, the remaining twelve are constructed from older stories or traditions which were then current in Western Europe. Some of these were folk-lore stories or romances of French or German origin, others were derived from the Norse or Icelandic sagas, others again from Arabic and other oriental sources, which had passed to Europe, having undergone many modifications and transformations on the way.

- (5) **General Remarks.**—(a) The idea of men flying from the Black Death and telling stories to beguile the time was probably suggested to Morris by Boccaccio's *Decameron*. (Boccaccio was an Italian story-teller, and the *Decameron* is a series of stories told by a group of persons to one another who have fled away from their native town on account of the plague.) If so, this idea has been wonderfully improved upon by Morris. (b) The idea of there being a land of happiness, like Paradise, in the western sea was a general tradition in Europe, to which Plato had given a certain amount of currency, and which again and again came into the imagination of European thinkers like Bacon. (c) There are beautiful interludes interspersed between every group of two stories. They serve as little introductions to each pair of tales. They give a poetical description of the beauty of the month in which the tales that follow are told, and are named after the names of the months. They contain some of the best lyrics of Morris.
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## SECTION III.

## "THE MAN BORN TO KING."

(1) **General character and Relation to "The Earthly Paradise."**—This story is the second tale told after the settlement of the *Wanderers* upon the Greek island and the first of the twelve stories told by the *Wanderers*.

(2) **Character of the poem: its romantic character.**—It is a *narrative* or *epic* poem, using the latter expression in its widest sense. (For the meaning of this term, See Section IV of this Introduction.) It is, however, more of a romance than an epic proper. That is, the treatment of the poem is romantic, with a good deal of incredible matter. The elements of a romance are apparent (1) in the introduction of a sage-prophet with extraordinary powers of prophecy (See verses 23 to 164), (2) in the scene of the King's dream, which is the most intensely romantic part of the story (verses 256 to 309), (3) in the scene which describes the attempted murder of the hero by the squire Samuel, and (4) in the romantic conclusion of the story when the heroine saves the life of the hero and becomes his wife.

(3) **The general purpose and ideas pervading the whole poem.**—The poem expresses in a vague yet reverent manner how the will of Providence is the supreme law in all human affairs and cannot be defeated by any human endeavour to the contrary. This is the principal moral of the poem, but a secondary moral will be apparent to the careful reader. The old King's pride is punished and he is taught that a man of obscure birth is a person good enough and great enough to wed his daughter and succeed him to the throne. The long line of kings of which he was to be the last is not to be considered as dishonoured, because such an obscure stranger in the end must sit on their throne. The pride of "*purple blood*" is humbled down. The poem illustrates the train of thoughts and ideas which ultimately turned Morris into a socialist. Every man is equal before God, and family pride pales into insignificance before His throne. For, after all, the obscure Michael, the hero of the poem, is no worse than the king himself. Michael too can claim descent from "the ancientest line the world doth hold,"—

“ For in the fertile Asian land,  
Where great Damascus now doth stand,  
Ages ago his line was born.”

(The student is referred to the notes on the above lines).

(4) **The Plot.**—The plot of the poem is briefly summarized below :—

- (a) An astrologer comes to a king's court and makes a prophecy that a person of obscure birth would succeed him as king.
- (b) Some time later the king goes out to hunt and has to take shelter for the night in a woodman's cottage. The king has a dream, in the course of which he hears a shriek, “ *Take! take!* ”. Again he falls asleep and again has a dream, and hears a voice saying, “ *Give up! give up!* ” He also sees the astrologer in his dream, telling him that the boy is born who is to succeed him.
- (c) Next morning the king discovers that the woodman's wife has been delivered during the night of a male child and died of child-labour. The king feels that this was the child referred to in the prophecy.
- (d) The king takes the child with him and tells his squire to drown him on the way. The squire casts the child into a river and thinks he will be drowned. On the same day the king's wife is delivered of a daughter (the heroine of the story).
- (e) Fourteen years later, the king, while out a-hunting came to a water-mill, saw a young boy Michael, whom he recognised to be the same person as the child whom he had attempted to drown. The miller's wife tells the king how she had found the child.
- (f) Next day the king sends his squire to bring the boy Michael from the mill under pretence of being promoted to the rank of nobility and to murder him on the way. The squire attempts to murder him, but the wound does not prove fatal. The squire is seized with a superstitious fear and seeks safety in flight.
- (g) The king's wife is dead and he sends the Princess to a distant castle, called the “ Castle of the Rose ”, telling

her that he would soon follow in company with the Prince whom he had chosen to marry her.

- (h) Soon afterwards an *abbot* comes to court accompanied by his monks and body-guard of soldiers. Among the latter the King recognises Michael. On being questioned, the sub-prior Adrian relates how he had discovered Michael wounded and had brought him up and educated him in the monastery.
- (i) The King asks the abbot to let Michael join the royal retinue. He sends Michael with a letter to be delivered to the lord *seneschal* (steward) of the Castle of the Rose. Michael arrives at the Castle, is shown by the warder into a garden, and falls asleep there.
- (j) Meanwhile the Princess with her companion Agnes enters the garden. They find Michael sleeping there. Agnes snatches the letter from Michael's waist-band and reads and shows it to the Princess. The letter was to the effect that the bearer of it was to be immediately put to death by the seneschal. The Princess, who has fallen in love with Michael, hastily goes to her chamber and writes another letter (on paper which she found ready sealed by the King) to the effect that the bearer of it should be immediately married to the Princess. The Princess substitutes the letter in Michael's waist-band. The seneschal accordingly carries out the supposed order of the King and marries Michael to the Princess.
- (k) The King comes to the Castle in high hope to see Michael dead, but is astonished to find him married to the Princess. He accepts him as his son-in-law and a partner in his kingdom.

(5) **Sources.**—Like most of the plots of Morris's romances, the plot of this story is borrowed with some modifications from a story contained in a celebrated collection of poems called the *Gesta Romanorum*. It was written in Latin, which was then a spoken language among educated people. The name "*Gesta Romanorum*" means the *Deeds of the Romans*, and this name was apparently given to the collection, because most of the stories in it are concerning real or imaginary Roman Emperors. The event treated by Morris

in his "The Man Born to be King" is, according to some versions of the *Gesta*, described as having occurred to the Roman Emperor Conrad II (1026—39).

The story as treated by Morris is very much modified. In its origin the story must have been a folk-lore tradition which had travelled mysteriously from east to west. The idea of an intended victim being by the dispensation of Providence married to the daughter of the intending murderer occurs in an episode in the *Mahābhārata*, the romantic story of *Chandrahāsa* and *Vishayā*, and an important modification made by Morris brings it nearer to the *Mahābhārata* version—though unconsciously—than even the version of the *Gesta Romanorum*. (See the concluding part of the next paragraph.)

(6) **Important modifications made by Morris in the version of the *Gesta Romanorum*.**—Morris made many modifications, all in the interest of poetic beauty and adornment. He added much and altered much. Among the *additions* and changes which his artistic instincts as a poet led him to make in the bald structure of the story in the "*Gesta Romanorum*," we may mention the following:—

- (a) The opening scene of the warning given by the astrologer is a pure addition.
- (b) The death of the woodman's wife is introduced into the story by Morris to make his parting with his new-born child appear more probable.
- (c) Morris introduces a second attempt on the part of the King to kill the boy when fourteen years of age, which is not to be found in the *Gesta* version.
- (d) Morris describes the queen as dead, while according to the *Gesta* story, the letter of which the hero was the bearer was addressed to the queen, and the marriage was brought about by her.
- (e) The most important alteration is as regards the person who re-writes the King's letter and turns an intended tragedy into a joyful event. In the *Gesta* version, we are told that a knight who gave shelter to the hero on his way re-wrote the letter. Morris makes the story more graceful and romantic by making the heroine of

the story—the princess—to make the alteration. The princess herself changes the order of execution into an order of marriage between herself and stranger, while an uninteresting third party makes that change in the *Gesta* version.

This last change is interesting in another sense. We have already remarked that the idea of an intended victim being married by the dispensation of Providence to the daughter of the intending murderer occurs in the story of *Chandrahāsa and Vishayā*, an episode in the *Mahābhārata*. And it may here be added that in the *Mahābhārata* episode the life of the hero is saved in exactly similar circumstances as those devised by Morris, *viz.*, (1) the hero of the epic episode (*Chandrahāsa*) is the bearer of a letter, which is read, while he is sleeping, by the heroine, (2) and the letter is re-written by the heroine herself so that it becomes not a warrant of death, but a command that he be married to the would-be murderer's daughter, the heroine. In the *Gesta* version, the King's wife carries out the order, while in the *Mahābhārata* version, the intending murderer's son brings about the marriage of his sister with the hero. In the *Mahābhārata* story, however, the hero is already a *de jure* King, and the intending murderer, an ambitious usurper. It will, therefore, be seen that the artistic and romantic genius of Morris has probably enabled him to restore the romantic form of the story which had been lost but which we see in what is evidently the original form, the *Chandrahāsa and Vishayā* episode in the *Mahābhārata*, and this is all the more remarkable, as probably he had not read the *Mahābhārata* episode. The alteration was directly suggested to Morris by a French romance of the thirteenth century. These alterations made the story more probable and interesting.

(7) **Time and place of the story.**—Morris tells us that the story does not belong to any definite time or place. But it is told by one of the "Wanderers" about the end of the fourteenth century. (See the Prologue, paragraph 4, section II). Thus it is clear that the events of the story cannot be imagined to have occurred at a later period than the middle of the fourteenth century. At the same time, one of the characters in the story makes a reference to the death of the emperor Frederick I (See line 1621). This event took place in 1190 A. D., and some time must have elapsed before ballads were made about his death. Therefore, we may imagine the time

of the story lies after 1190 A. D., i.e., between 1200 to 1300 A. D. The dresses, manners, etc. of the persons in the story were of the fourteenth century. The scene lies perhaps in England or Northern France, as may be conjectured from the apple-orchards, fir-woods, and vine-yards, which fast require a warmer climate.

(8) **Style** :—(a) The poem, says Stopford Brooke, is “told with extraordinary charm and invention”. Speaking of Morris’s nature-poetry, the same critic says, “The descriptions, so opulent in colour, of so great a clearness, so *enlivened with animal life* and figures, and done with so careful a *love of beauty*, have a general adaptation to the story and the time they belong to [*i. e. one quite in harmony with the period of the Middle Ages*, in which this story is placed], but they have no other relation to society.” The words italicised in the above passage clearly describe the qualities of poetical style seen in this poem. In illustration of this, the student should refer to the critical notes on such verses as 465–68, 758–762, 1514–1523, 1541–1546. Some of the descriptions in these lines are remarkable for clearness of observation, colouring, and description. (b) The journey of Michael, from l. 1448 to 1587, is full of striking descriptions. Speaking of this passage, Stopford Brooke says :—“The journey of Michael to the Castle of the Rose takes two or three days, and the successive *landscapes* of the countryside are *described with so such charm and accuracy that we see them with the rider’s eyes and heart*. Morris enjoyed all that belonged to the Middle Ages; hence arose the wonderful clearness and vividness of his description.” (c) On the other hand, the characters are drawn in a *shadowy* manner, but the *energy* of some of their actions comes upon us from this very circumstance with a double force and impressiveness. Lastly, the whole story is treated like a romance, and prophecy and superstition freely play their part. (d) The narrative is never dull on account of the poet’s sustained charm and invention.

(9) **Diction**.—*Diction* is style as displayed in language, vocabulary, and sentence-structure. (a) The style of the poem is simple and one best suited to a narrative poem of this kind. (b) But the use of obsolete words and phrases, and especially the use of adverbs and conjunctions like “*therewith*” “*midst this*,” “*certainly*,” “*withal*” etc. is noticeable. (c) This is purposely intended to keep

up the spirit of the 'Middle Ages.' Besides Morris desired to let alone the stale and conventional phrases of modern times. (A list of these obsolete words is given in Appendix I). It may be remarked that the archaic forms came so naturally from the pen of Morris that he could not avoid them even in his prose romances. (d) The sentence-structure is wonderfully free from complication. (e) There is no useless rhetoric or declamation. (f) The vocabulary is copious and strong in its Saxon element.

(10) **Metre.**—The poem is written in the *Iambic rhythm*. In this *rhythm*, a *foot* consists of two syllables of which the first is *unstressed* (unaccented) and the second is *stressed* (accented). Each verse consist of *four* such feet or eight syllables, hence the metre used here is called "*iambic tetrameter*" (from Greek *tetra*=four) or more familiarly the "*octosyllabic*" metre (from Latin *octo*=eight), their being eight syllables in a line. The plan of the metre therefore is:—

— | — | — | — where — stands for *unstressed* and the

sign — stands for a *stressed* syllable.

But for the sake of variety the *first foot* is constantly changed

from the *iambic* (— | —) to a *trochee* (i. e. — | —) and other variation) are frequently to be met with. Each verse has properly *eight syllables* in it, but if more than eight are found, the student should know that one or more of these syllables are to be *slurred* or *elided* (i. e. dropped) in *scanning* the verse. This *slurring* is called *elision*. The following is a normal verse scanned:—

— | — | — | —  
Yet is | he good | and doth | no wrong

But notice the *trochee* in the first foot of the following:—

— | — | — | —  
Deep in | thy side | there show | it now

\*

\*

\*

\*

— | — | — | —  
making | as he | was heark | ening



As an example of *elision*, compare line 1296 where the word "heavenly" is equal to "heav'nly" in scanning:—

◡   ◡ A heav'n	◡   ◡ ly tink	◡   ◡ ling but	◡   ◡ the lad
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## SECTION IV.

### ON NARRATIVE POETRY.

1. "The Man Born to be King" is a *narrative* poem, so also is the "Earthly Paradise."

2. A *narrative* poem narrates an event or series of events. The word "*Epic*" is used in a wide sense as a *synonym* for "*narrative*". In this loose sense, "The Man Born to be King" is an Epic poem. The interest of such a poem lies mainly in the incidents and characters.

3. Under this comprehensive term "*narrative*" or "*Epic*" are included many styles of composition, viz: the *Epic proper* or Homeric Epic, the *romance*, the *tale*, the *ballad*. It is difficult to exhaust the *varieties* and more difficult still to separate the one from the other. But the "*Epic proper*" has always been divided sharply from all other forms of Narrative poetry by certain well defined characteristics.

4. **Characteristics of "Epic" Proper**—In the "Epic" proper, we have the relation of.

- (a) A heroic or momentous action. (b) The action is very often a great national event, or an event of the utmost consequence in the life of society. (c) It is a *long* story combining many episodes, but all leading up to one grand central event. (This is called *unity of action*).
- (d) The characters are grand heroical personages, gods and demi-gods being often described as taking part in the action. (e) Nevertheless, the narration and description must have human interest, must be not only credible but *probable*. It must not be fantastic. (f) The poem must be written in a grand, elevated diction and spirited sonorous verse, as may be in fitness with the dignity of

the theme and the majesty of the great heroes and gods who are its main characters.

5. The *Romances* of the middle Ages differ from the strict Homeric model in being too fantastic, too improbable, too incredible. Such Romances were later on written in Europe both in prose and verse, in French and Italian, and also in English: the most famous are the stories about King Arthur and his knights (Malorly's *Morte D'Arthur*) and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. In an *Epic proper* we often find this element of Romance (the romantic), but in a restrained manner. The *Odyssey* is more romantic than the *Iliad*, and the Indian Epics, the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* are more romantic still than the *Odyssey*. The contents of the "Romances" of the Middle Ages are *fantastic* without restraint.

(6) The *poetical tale* is a narrative poem of a less ambitious kind. It often keeps up the main qualities of an Epic poem, especially *probability*; but is often romantic in treatment. The most famous writers of these *tales* in English were Scott, Byron, and Keats. Morris's tales are more *romantic* and might rather be called *romances*. In modern times, the prose novel has taken the place of the *poetical tale*, but *poetical tales* and romances are still written and read.

(7) At the end of the scale of "*Narrative poetry*" we may put the *Ballad* or "*short story*" such as Cowper's *John Gilpin*, or *Lord Ullin's Daughter*.

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## SECTION V.

For further information about Morris the *advanced* student is referred to the following:—

*Four poets*, by Stopford Brook—

William Morris, by Noyes in the "English Men of Letters" Series.

William Morris: *His Work and Influence*, by A. Clutton—  
Brock in the "Home University Library" Series.

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## HINTS TO THE BEGINNER IN READING THE INTRODUCTION.

For the *first reading* omit Section IV *altogether* and

Read Section I, paragraphs 1,2,4,6,8.

Read Section II, „ 1,2,4.

Read Section III, „ 1,3,4,5, 8 and 9.

For the needs of the average student, this is all the introductory matter required; the other portion is meant for more intelligent students.

## SYNOPSIS OF THE INTRODUCTION.

### SECTION I.—The Poet.

(1) Early life : (a) childhood, (b) at school, (c) college life, (d) travel. (2) Morris's view of art. (3) Morris as a Social Reformer, (4) Morris as a Designer, (5) General spirit and character of his literary work. (6) Brief survey of Morris's poetical career : (A) Original poems, (B) Translations. (7) Brief survey of his prose writings. (8) Last years of his prose writings. (8) Last years of his life—Morris as a socialist.

### SECTION II.—“The Earthly Paradise.”

(1) General character. (2) Indebtedness to Chaucer. (3) The problem solved in the Prologue. (4) the Plot of the Prologue. (5) General remarks.

### SECTION III.—“The Man Born to be king.”

(1) General character and relation to the whole. (2) The romantic character of the poem. (3) The general propose ideas pervading the poem. (4) The Plot. (5) Sources. (6) modifications made in these sources by Morris. (7) Time and place of the story. (8) Style : (a) charm, colour, clearness harmony with the Middle Ages; (b) special descriptive passage, the journey of Michael; (c) shadowy characters; (d) narrative never dull. (9) Diction : (a) simple and suitable, (b) archaic and obsolete words, (c) the propriety of using them, (d) sentence structure simple, (e) no needless rhetoric, (f) Saxon strength of vocabulary. (10) Metre.

### SECTION IV.—On Narrative Poetry.

(1) The poem, for study is a *Narrative* poem. (2) What is a narrative poem? (3) Kind of Narrative poetry. (4) Characteristics of “Epic” Proper, (5) Romances. (6) The Poetical Tale. (7) Short story or ballad.

### SECTION V.—Books recommended for advanced study.

# THE MAN BORN TO BE KING.

## ARGUMENT.

It was foretold to a great King, that he who should reign after him should be low-born and poor; which thing came to pass in the end, for all that the King could do.

A KING, there was in days of old  
Who ruled wide lands, nor lacked for gold,  
Nor honour, nor much longed for praise,  
And his days were called happy days,  
So peaceable his kingdoms were,  
While others wrapt in war and fear  
Fell ever unto worse and worse.

Therefore his city was the nurse  
Of all that men then had of lore,  
And none were driven from his door 10  
That seemed well skilled in anything;  
So of the sages was he king;  
And from this learned man and that,  
Little by little, lore he gat,  
And many a lordless, troubled land  
Fell scarce loth to his dreaded hand.

Midst this it chanced that, on a day,  
Clad in his glittering gold array,  
He held a royal festival;  
And nigh him in his glorious hall 20  
Beheld his sages most and least,  
Sitting much honoured at the feast.  
But mid the faces so well known,  
Of men he well might call his own,  
He saw a little wizened man  
With face grown rather grey than wan  
From lapse of years; beardless was he,  
And bald as is the winter tree;  
But his two deep-set, glittering eyes  
Gleamed at the sight of mysteries 30



To tell thee somewhat that I learned  
As on the stars I gazed, and yearned  
To cast this weary body off,  
With all its chains of mock and scoff  
And creeping death—for as I read  
The sure decrees with joy and dread, 70  
Somewhat I saw writ down of thee,  
And who shall have the sovereignty  
When thou art gone. "

"Nay," said the King,  
"Speak quick and tell me of the thing."

"Sire," said the Sage, "thine ancient line  
Thou holdest as a thing divine,  
So long and undisturbed it is,  
But now shall there be end to this,  
For surely in my glittering text  
I read that he who shall sit next, 80  
On this thine ancient throne and high,  
Shall be no better born than I  
Whose grandsire none remembereth,  
Nor where my father first drew breath."

"Yea," said the King, "and this may be;  
Yet, O Sage, ere I credit thee,  
Some token certes must thou show,  
Or tell me what I think to know,  
Alone, among all folk alive ;  
Then surely great gifts will I give 90  
To thee, and make thee head of all  
Who watch the planets rise and fall."

"Bid these stand backward from thy throne,"  
The Sage said, "then to thee alone  
Long hidden matters will I tell ;  
And then, if thou believest, well—  
And if thou dost not—'well also ;  
No gift I ask, but leave to go,

**THE MAN BORN TO BE KING.**

For strange to me is this thy state,  
And for thyself, thou well may'st hate  
My crabbed age and misery." 100

“ Well, ” said the King, “ let this thing be ;  
And ye, my masters, stand aback !  
For of the fresh air have I lack,  
And in my pleasure would I walk  
To hearken this grave elder’s talk  
And gain new lore. ”

And led the way unto a close,  
Shaded with grey-leaved olive-trees;  
And when they were amidst of these 110  
He turned about and said, "Speak, friend,  
And of thy folly make an end,  
And take this golden chain therefore."

"Rightly thou namest my weak lore,"  
 The Sage said, "therefore to the end  
 Be wise, and what fates may send  
 Take thou, nor struggle in the net  
 Wherein thine helpless feet are set !  
 —Hearken ! a year is well-nigh done  
 Since, at the hottest of the sun,  
 Stood Antony beneath this tree,  
 And took a jewelled cup of thee,  
 And drank swift death in guise of wine ;  
 Since he, most trusted of all thine,  
 At last too full of knowledge grew,  
 And chiefly, he of all men knew  
 How the Earl Marshal Hugh had died,  
 Since he had drawn him on to ride  
 Into a bushment of his foes,  
 To meet death from unnumbered blows."

“Thou knowest that by me he died,”  
The King said, “how if now I cried,

Help! the magician slayeth me?  
Swiftly should twenty sword-blades be  
Clashing within thy ribs, and thou  
Nearer to death than even now."

"Not thus, O King, I fear to die,"  
The Sage said; "Death shall pass me by  
Many a year yet, because perchance,  
I fear not aught his clattering dance,  
And have enough of weary days. .

140

—But thou—farewell, and win the praise  
Of sages, by thy hearkening

With heed to this most certain thing.

Fear not because this tale I know,

For to my grey tower back I go

High raised above the heathy hills

Where the great erne the swift hare kills,

Or stoops upon the new-yeaned lamb;

There almost as a god I am

150

Unto few folk, who hear thy name

Indeed, but know nought of thy fame,

Nay, scarce if thou be man or beast."

So saying, back unto the feast

He turned, and went adown the hall,

Not heeding any gibe or call;

And left the palace and the town

With face turned toward his windy down.

Back to the hall, too, the King went,

With eyes upon the pavement bent

160

In pensive thought, delighting not

In riches and his kingly lot;

But thinking how his days began,

And of the lonely souls of man.

But time passed and midst this and that,  
The wise man's message he forgot;  
And as a King he lived his life,



And took to him a noble wife  
Of the kings' daughters, rich and fair.  
And they being wed for nigh a year, 170  
And she now growing great with child,  
It happed unto the forest wild  
This King with many folk must ride  
At ending of the summer-tide;  
There boar and hart they brought to bay,  
And had right noble prize that day;  
But when the noon was now long past,  
And the thick woods grew overcast,  
They roused the mightiest hart of all.  
Then loudly 'gan the King to call 180  
Unto his huntsmen, not to leave  
That mighty beast for dusk nor eve  
Till they had won him; with which word  
His horn he blew, and forth he spurred,  
Taking no thought of most or least,  
But only of that royal beast.  
And over rough and smooth he rode,  
Nor yet for anything abode,  
Till dark night swallowing up the day  
With blindness his swift course must stay. 190  
Nor was there with him any one  
So far his fair steed had outrun  
The best of all his hunting-folk.  
So, glancing at the stars that broke  
' Twixt the thick branches here and there,  
Backward he turned, and peered with care  
Into the darkness, but saw nought,  
Nor heard his folk, and therewith thought  
His bed must be the brake leaves brown.  
Then in a while he lighted down, 200  
And felt about a little space,  
If he might find a softer place;

But as he groped from tree to tree  
Some glimmering light he seemed to see  
' Twixt the dark stems, and thither turned,  
If yet perchance some wood-fire burned  
Within a peasant's hut, where he  
Might find, amidst their misery  
Rough food, or shelter at the least.

So, leading on his wearied beast, 210  
Blindly he crept from tree to tree,  
Till slowly grew that light to be  
The thing he looked for, and he found  
A hut on a cleared space of ground,  
From whose half-opened door there streamed  
The light that erst far off had gleamed.

Then of that shelter was he fain,  
But just as he made shift to gain  
The open space in front of it,  
A shadow o'er the grass did flit, 220  
And on the wretched threshold stood  
A big man, with a bar of wood  
In his right hand, who seemed as though  
He got him ready for a blow ;  
But ere he spoke the King cried, " Friend,  
May God good hap upon thee send,  
If thou wilt give me rest this night,  
And food according to thy might."

" Nay," said the carle, " my wife lieth 230  
In labour, and is nigh her death :  
Nor canst thou enter here at all,  
But near by is my asses' stall,  
Who on this night bide in the town ;  
There, if thou wilt, mayst thou lie down,  
And sleep until the dawn of day,  
And I will bring thee what I may  
Of food and drink. "

Then said the King,  
"Thanked be thou; neither for nothing  
Shalt thou this good deed do to me."  
"Nay," said the carle, "let these things be, 240  
Surely I think before the morn,  
To be too weary and forlorn  
For gold much heart in me to put."  
With that he turned, and from the hut  
Brought out a lantern, and rye-bread,  
And wine, and showed the King a shed,  
Strewed with a litter of dry brake:  
Withal he muttered, for his sake,  
Unto Our Lady some rude prayer,  
And turned about and left him there. 250

So when the rye-bread, nowise fine,  
The King had munched, and with green wine  
Had quenched his thirst, his horse he tied  
Unto a post, and there beside  
He fell asleep upon the brake.

But in an hour did he awake,  
Astonied with an unnamed fear,  
For words were ringing in his ear  
Like the last echo of a scream,  
"Take! take!" but of the vanished dream 260  
No image was there left to him.  
Then, trembling sore in every limb,  
Did he arise, and drew his sword,  
And passed forth on the forest sward,  
And cautiously about he crept;  
But nought at all he heard, except  
Some groaning of the woodman's wife,  
And forest sounds well known, but rife  
With terror to the lonely soul.

Then he lay down again, to roll 270

His limbs within his huntsman's cloak ;  
And slept again, and once more woke  
To tremble with that unknown fear,  
And other echoing words to hear—  
“ Give up ! give up ! ” nor anything  
Showed more why these strange words should ring  
About him. Then he sat upright,  
Bewildered, gazing through the night,  
Until his weary eyes, grown dim,  
Showed not the starlit tree-trunks slim 280  
Against the black wood, grey and plain ;  
And into sleep he sank again,  
And woke not soon : but sleeping dreamed  
That he awoke, nor other seemed  
The place he woke in but that shed,  
And there beside his bracken bed  
He seemed to see the ancient Sage  
Shrivelled yet more with untold age,  
Who bending down his head to him  
Said, with a mocking smile and grim, 290  
“ Take, or give up ; what matters it ? ”  
This child new-born shall surely sit  
Upon thy seat when thou art gone,  
And dwelling 'twixt straight walls of stone. ”  
Again the King woke at that word  
And sat up, panting and afeard,  
And staring out into the night,  
Where yet the woods thought not of light ;  
And fain he was to cast off sleep,  
Such visions from his eyes to keep. 300  
Heavy his head grew none the less,  
' Twixt wildering thoughts and weariness,  
And soon he fell asleep once more,  
Nor dreamed, nor woke again, before  
The sun shone through the forest trees ;

And, shivering in the morning breeze,  
He blinked with just-awakened eyes,  
And pondering on those mysteries,  
Unto the woodman's hut he went.

Him he found kneeling down, and bent 310  
In moody grief above a bed,  
Whereon his wife lay, stark and dead,  
Whose soul near morn had passed away ;  
And 'twixt the dead and living lay  
A new-born man-child, fair and great.  
So in the door the King did wait  
To watch the man, who had no heed  
Of this or that, so sore did bleed  
The new-made wound within his heart.  
But as the King gazed, for his part 320  
He did but see his threatened foe.  
And ever hard his heart did grow  
With deadly hate and wilfulness :  
And sight of that poor man's distress  
Made it the harder, as of nought  
But that unbroken line he thought  
Of which he was the last : withal  
His scornful troubled eyes did fall  
Upon that nest of poverty,  
Where nought of joy he seemed to see. 330

On straw the poor dead woman lay ;  
The door alone let in the day,  
Showing the trodden earthen floor,  
A board on trestles weak and poor,  
Three stumps of tree for stool or chair,  
A half-glazed pipkin, nothing fair,  
A bowl of porridge by the wife,  
Untouched by lips that lacked for life,  
A platter and a bowl of wood ;

And in the further corner stood 340  
A bow cut from the wych-elm tree,  
A holly club, and arrows three  
Ill pointed, heavy, spliced with thread.

Ah! soothly, well remembered  
Was that unblissful wretched home,  
Those four bare walls, in days to come;  
And often in the coming years  
He called to mind the pattering tears  
That, on the rent old sackcloth cast  
About the body, fell full fast, 350-  
' Twixt half-meant prayers and curses wild,  
And that weak wailing of the child,  
His threatened dreadful enemy,  
The mighty King that was to be.

But as he gazed unsoftened there,  
With hate begot of scorn and care,  
Loudly he heard a great horn blow,  
And his own hunting call did know,  
And soon began the shouts to hear,  
Of his own people drawing near. 360-  
Then lifting up his horn, he blew  
A long shrill point, but as he threw  
His head aback, beheld his folk,  
Who from the close-set thicket broke  
And o'er the cleared space swiftly passed,  
With shouts that he was found at last.

Then turned the carle his doleful face,  
And slowly rising in his place,  
Drew thwart his eyes his fingers strong,  
And on that gay-dressed glittering throng 370-  
Gazed stupidly, as still he heard  
The name of King; but said no word,  
But his guest spoke, "Sirs, well be ye!

This luckless woodman, whom ye see,  
Gave me good harbour through the night  
And such poor victual as he might;  
Therefore shall he have more than gold  
For his reward; since dead and cold  
His helpmate lies who last night died.  
See now the youngling by her side;  
Him will I take and rear him so  
That he shall no more lie alow  
In straw, or from the beech-tree dine,  
But rather use white linen fine  
And silver plate; and with the sword  
Shall learn to serve some King or Lord.  
How say'st thou, good man?"

"Sire," he said,  
Weeping, but shamefaced,—“since here dead  
She lies, that erst kept house for me,  
E'en as thou wilt let it be;  
Though I had hoped to have a son  
To help me get the day's work done.  
And now, indeed, forth must he go  
If unto manhood he should grow,  
And lonely I must wander forth,  
To whom east, west, and south, and north  
Are all alike: forgive it me  
If little thanks I give to thee  
Who scarce can thank great God in heaven  
For what is left of what was given.”

400

Small heed unto him the King gave,  
But trembling in his haste to have  
The body of his enemy,  
Said to an old squire, “Bring to me  
The babe, and give the good man this  
Wherewith to gain a little bliss,  
In place of all his troubles gone,

Nor need he now be long alone."

The carle's rough face, at clink of gold,  
Lit up, though still did he behold 410  
The wasted body lying there;  
But stooping, a rough box, foursquare,  
Made of old wood and lined with hay,  
Wherein the helpless infant lay.  
He raised, and gave it to the squire  
Who on the floor cast down his hire,  
Nor sooth dared murmur aught the while,  
But turning smiled a grim hard smile  
To see the carle his pieces count  
Still weeping : so did all men mount 420  
And turning round into the wood  
Forgot him and his drearihood,  
And soon were far off from the hut.

Then coming out, the door he shut  
Behind him, and adown a glade,  
Towards a rude hermitage he made  
To fetch the priest unto his need,  
To bury her and say her bede—  
So when all things that he might do  
Were done aright, heavy with woe, 430  
He left the woodland hut behind  
To take such chance as he might find  
In other lands, forgetting all  
That in that forest did befall.

But through the wild wood rode the King,  
Moody and thinking on the thing,  
Nor free from that unreasoning fear;  
Till now, when they had drawn anear  
The open country, and could see  
The road run on from close to lea, 440  
And lastly by a wooden bridge



A long way from that heathy ridge  
Cross over a deep lowland stream—  
Then in his eyes there came a gleam,  
And his hand fell upon his sword,  
And turning round to squire and lord  
He said, " Ride, sires, the way is clear,  
Nor of my people have I fear,  
Nor do my foes range over wide ;  
And for myself fain would I ride 450  
Right slowly homewards through the fields  
Noting what this and that one yields ;  
While by my squire who bears the child  
Lightly my way shall be beguiled.  
For some nurse now he needs must have  
This tender life of his to save ;  
And doubtless by the stream there is  
Some house where he may dwell in bliss,  
Till he grow old enough to learn  
How gold and glory he may earn ; 460  
And grow, perchance, to be a lord. "

With downcast eyes he spoke that word ;  
But forth they galloped speedily,  
And he drew rein and stood to see  
Their green coats lessening as they went.  
This man unto the other bent,  
Until mid dust and haze at last  
Into a wavering mass they passed ;  
Then 'twixt the hedgerows vanished quite  
Just told of by the dust-cloud white 470  
Rolled upwards 'twixt the elm-trunks slim.

Then turned the King about to him  
Who held the child, noting again  
The thing wherein he first had lain,  
And on one side of it could see

A lion painted hastily  
In red upon a ground of white,  
As though of old it had been dight  
For some lord's rough-wrought palisade ;  
But naked 'mid the hay was laid  
The child, and had no mark or sign.

480

Then said the King, " My ancient line  
Thou and thy sires through good and ill  
Have served, and unto thee my will  
Is law enough from day to day ;  
Ride nigh me hearkening what I say. "

He shook his rein and side by side  
Down through the meadows did they ride,  
And opening all his heart, the King  
Told to the old man everything  
Both of the Sage, and of his dream ;  
Withal drawn nigh unto the stream,  
He said, " Yet this shall never be ;  
For surely as thou lovest me,  
Adown this water shall he float  
With this rough box for ark and boat ;  
Then if mine old line he must spill  
There let God save him if He will,  
While I in no case shed his blood. "

490

" Yea, " said the squire, " thy words are good, 500  
For the whole sin shall lie on me,  
Who greater things would do for thee  
If need there were ; yet note, I pray,  
It may be he will ' scape this day  
And live ; and what wouldst thou do then  
If thou shouldst meet him among men ?  
I counsel thee to let him go  
Since sure to nought thy will shall grow. "

" Yea, yea, " the King said, " let all be  
That may be, if I once but see

510

This ark whirl in the eddies swift  
Or tangled in the autumn drift  
And wrong side up: " but with that word  
Their horse-hoofs on the plank he heard,  
And swift across the bridge he rode,  
And nigh the end of it abode,  
Then turned to watch the old squire stop,  
And leaning o'er the bridge-rail drop  
The luckless child; he heard withal  
A muttered word and splashing fall 520  
And from the wakened child a cry,  
And saw the cradle hurrying by,  
Whirled round and sinking, but as yet  
Holding the child, nor overset.

Now somewhat, soothly at the sight  
Did the King doubt if he outright  
Had rid him of his feeble foe,  
But frowning did he turn to go  
Unto his home, nor knew indeed  
How better he might help his need ; 530  
And as unto his house he rode  
Full little care for all he showed,  
Still bidding Samuel the squire  
Unto his bridle-hand ride nigher,  
To whom he talked of careless things,  
As unto such will talk great kings.

But when unto his palace gate  
He came at last, thereby did wait  
The chamberlain with eager eyes  
Above his lips grown grave with lies. 540  
In haste to tell him that the Queen,  
While in the wild-wood he had been,  
Had borne a daughter unto him  
Strong, fair of face, and straight of limb.  
So well at ease and glad thereat

His troubled dream he nigh forgot,  
His troubled waking, and the ride  
Unto the fateful river-side ;  
Or thought of all as little things  
Unmeet to trouble souls of kings. 550

So passed the days, so passed the years  
In such-like hopes, and such-like fears,  
And such-like deeds in field and hall  
As unto royal men befall ;  
And fourteen years have passed away  
Since on the huddled brake he lay  
And dreamed that dream, remembered now  
Once and again, when slow and slow  
The minutes of some sleepless night  
Crawl toward the dawning of the light. 560

Remembered not on this sweet morn  
When to the ringing of the horn,  
Jingle of bits and mingled shout  
Toward that same stream he rideth out  
To see his grey-winged falcons fly.

So long he rode he drew anigh  
A mill upon the river's brim,  
That seemed a goodly place to him,  
For o'er the oily smooth millhead  
There hung the apples growing red, 570  
And many an ancient apple-tree  
Within the orchard could he see,  
While the smooth millwalls white and black  
Shook to the great wheel's measured clack,  
And grumble of the gear within ;  
While o'er the roof that dulled that din  
The doves sat crooning half the day,  
And round the half-cut stack of hay  
The sparrows fluttered twittering.

There smiling stayed the joyous King, 580

And since the autumn noon was hot  
Thought good anigh that pleasant spot  
To dine that day, and therewith sent  
To tell the miller his intent :

Who held the stirrup of the King,  
Bareheaded, joyful at the thing,  
While from his horse he lit adown,  
Then led him o'er an elm-beam brown,  
New cut in February tide.

That crossed the stream from side to side : 590

So underneath the apple-trees  
The King sat careless, well at ease  
And ate and drank right merrily.

To whom the miller drew anigh  
Among the courtiers, bringing there  
Such as he could of country fare,  
Green yellowing plums from off his wall,  
Wasp-bitten pears, the first to fall  
From off the wavering spire-like tree,  
Junkets, and cream and fresh honey.

Smiling the King regarded him,  
For he was round-paunched, short of limb,  
Red-faced, with long, lank flaxen hair ;  
But with him was a boy, right fair,  
Grey-eyed, and yellow-haired, most like  
Unto some Michael who doth strike  
The dragon on a minster wall,  
So sweet-eyed was he, and withal  
So fearless of all things he seemed.

But when he saw him the King deemed 610  
He scarce could be the miller's kin,  
And laughing said, " Hast thou within  
Thy dusty mill the dame who bore  
This stripling in the days of yore,  
For fain were I to see her now,

If she be liker him than thou?"

"Sire," said the miller, "that may be  
And thou my dame shall surely see;  
But for the stripling, neither I  
Begat him nor my wife did lie  
In labour when the lad was born,  
But as an outcast and forlorn  
We found him fourteen years to-day,  
So quick the time has passed away."

620

Then the King, hearkening what he said,  
A vanished day remembered,  
And troubled grew his face thereat:  
But while he thought of this and that  
The man turned from him and was gone  
And by him stood the lad alone;  
At whom he gazed, and as their eyes  
Met, a great horror 'gan arise  
Within his heart, and back he shrank,  
And shuddering a deep draught he drank,  
Scarce knowing if his royal wine  
He touched, or juice of some hedge-vine.

630

But as his eyes he lifted up  
From off his jewelled golden cup,  
Once more the miller drew anigh,  
By whom his wife went timidly  
Bearing some burden in her hand;  
So when before him she did stand  
And he beheld her worn and old,  
And black-haired, then that hair of gold,  
Grey eyes, firm lips, and round cleft chin,  
Brought stronger memory of his sin.

640

But the carle spake, "Dame, tell the King  
How this befell, a little thing  
The thoughts of such great folk to hold;

Speak out, and fear not to be bold ”.

650

“ My tale, ” she said, “ is short enow,

For this day fourteen years ago

Along this river-side I rode

From market to our poor abode,

Where dwelt we far from other men,

Since thinner was the country then

Than now it is ; so as I went

And wearied o'er my panniers bent,

From out the stream a feeble cry

I heard, and therewith presently

660

From off my mule's back could I see

This boy who standeth here by thee,

A naked, new-born infant, laid

In a rough ark that had been stayed

By a thick tangled bed of weed ;

So pitying the youngling's need,

Dismounting, did I wade for him

Waist deep, whose ark now scarce did swim ;

And he, with cold, and misery,

And hunger, was at point to die.

670

“ Withal, I bare him to the mill

And cherished him, and had good will

To bring the babe up as mine own ;

Since childless were we and alone,

And no one came to father it.

So oft have I rejoiced to sit

Beside the fire and watch him play.

And now, behold him !—but some day

I look to lose him, for, indeed,

I deem he comes of royal seed,

680

Unmeet for us : and now, my lord,

Have you heard every foolish word

About my son—this boy—whose name

Is Michael soothly, since he came

To us this day nigh Michaelmas.  
—See, sire, the ark wherein he was !  
Which I have kept. ”

Therewith she drew

A cloth away ; but the King knew,  
Long ere she moved, what he should see,  
Nor looked but seeming carelessly  
Leaned on the board and hid his eyes. 690

But at the last did he arise  
And saw the painted lion red,  
Not faded, well remembered ;  
Withal he thought, “ And who of these  
Were with me then amongst the trees  
To see this box ? ” but presently  
He thought again that none but he  
And the grey squire, old Samuel,  
That painting could have noted well. 700

Since Samuel his cloak had cast  
About it, and therewith had past  
Throughout the forest on that day,  
And not till all were well away  
Had drawn it off before the King.  
But changed and downcast at the thing  
He left the lovely autumn place,  
Still haunted by the new-found face  
Of his old foe, and back he rode  
Unto his ancient rich abode 710

Forcing but dismal merriment  
As midst his smiling lords he went ;  
Who yet failed not to note his mood,  
So changed : and some men of the wood  
Remembered them, but said not aught,  
Yea, trembled lest their hidden thought  
Some bird should learn, and carry it.



The morrow come, the King did sit  
Alone, to talk with Samuel,  
Who yet lived, gathering wage for hell. 720  
He from the presence in a while  
Came forth, and with his ugly smile  
He muttered, " Well betide me, then,  
St. Peter ! they are lucky men  
Who serve no kings, since they indeed  
May damn themse'ves each for his need.  
And will not he outlive this day  
Whom the deep water could not slay,  
Ere yet his lips had tasted food ? "  
With that a horse, both strong and good, 730  
He gat of the King's equerry,  
And toward the mill rode speedily.

There Michael by the mill-tail lay,  
Watching the swift stream snatch away  
His float from midst the careless dace ;  
But thinking of the thin, dark face,  
That yesterday all men he saw  
Gaze at with seeming love and awe ;  
Nor had he, wondering at the lords,  
Lost one word of the housewife's words ; 740  
And still he noted that the King  
Beheld him as a wondrous thing,  
Strange to find there : so in his heart  
He thought to play some royal part  
In this wild play of life, and made  
Stories, wherein great words he said,  
And did great deeds in desperate fight.  
But midst these thoughts there came in sight  
He who had carried him of yore,  
From out the woodman's broken door, 750  
Dressed like a King's man, with fine gold

Touching his hard brown hands and old,  
So was his sleeve embroidered;  
A plumed hat had he on his head,  
And by his side a cutting sword  
Fit for the girdle of a lord;  
And round his neck a knife he bore,  
Whose hilt was well enamelled o'er  
With green leaves on a golden ground,  
Whose stem a silver scroll enwound;  
Charged with these letters, writ in black,  
*Strike! for no dead man cometh back!*

760

The boy gazed at him earnestly,  
With beating heart, as he drew nigh.  
And when at last he drew his rein  
Beside him, thought that not in vain  
His dream might be. But Samuel  
Below his breath said; "Surely well  
Shalt thou fulfil thy destiny;  
And, spite of all, thou wilt not die  
Till thou hast won the arched crown."

770

But with that word he lighted down,  
And said aloud, "Lad, tell to me  
Where the good miller I may see,  
For from the King I come to-day,  
And have a word of his to say:  
I think, indeed, concerning thee;  
For surely thou his lad must be."

Then Michael leapt up, nor took heed  
Of how the nibbling dace might feed  
Upon the loose ends of his bait;  
"Fair sir," he said, "my sire doth wait  
Until men bring his mare from grass,  
For to the good town will he pass,  
Since he has need of household gear;  
Follow, my lord, the place is here."

780

Withal, the good steed being made fast,  
Unto the other side they passed,  
And by the door the miller found,  
Who bowed before him to the ground, 790  
And asked what he would have him do—  
Then from his bosom Samnel drew  
A scroll, and said, " Good friend, read here,  
And do my bidding without fear  
Of doing ill. "

" Sir, " said the man,  
" But little lettered skill I can ;  
Let my dame come, for she can read  
Well-written letters at good need. "

" Nay, friend, " he said, " suffice it thee  
This seal at the scroll's end to see, 800  
My Lord the King's ; and hear my word,  
That I come hither from my lord  
Thy foundling lad to have away  
To serve the King from this same day. "

Downcast the miller looked thereat,  
And twisting round his dusty hat,  
Said, " Well, my lord, so must it be,  
Nor is he aught akin to me,  
Nor seems so: none the less would I  
Have left him, when I came to die, 810  
All things I have, with this my mill,  
Wherein he hath no 'prentice skill,  
Young as he is : and surely here  
Might he have lived, with little fear,  
A life of plenty and of bliss—  
Near by, too, a fair maid there is,  
I looked should be good wife to him. "

Meanwhile young Michæl's head 'gan swim  
With thoughts of noble life and praise ;

And he forgot the happy days  
Wherein the happy dreams he dreamed  
That now so near fulfilment seemed:  
And, looking through the open mill,  
Started at the grey and windy hill  
And saw it not, but some fair place  
Made strange with many a changing face,  
And all his life that was to be.

But Samuel, laughing scornfully,  
Said, "O good soul, thou thinkest then  
This is a life for well-born men,  
As our lord deems this youngling is—  
Tell me, good lad, where lies thy bliss?"

But Michael turned shamefaced and red,  
Waked from his dream, and stammering said,  
“Fair Sir, my life is sweet and good,  
And John, the ranger of the wood,  
Saith that I drew so good a bow,  
That I shall have full skill enow  
Ere many months have passed me by  
To join the muster, and to try  
To win the bag of florins white,  
That folk, on Barnaby the bright,  
Shoot for within the market town.  
Sir, please you to look up and down  
The weedy reaches of our stream,  
And note the bubbles of the bream,  
And see the great chub take the fly,  
And watch the long pike basking lie  
Outside the shadow of the weed.

Withal there come unto our need  
Woodcock and snipe when swallows go ;  
And now the water-hen flies low  
With feet that well-nigh touch the reeds,  
And plovers cry about the meads.

And the stares chatter ; certes, sir,  
It is a fair place all the year."

Eyeing him grimly, Samuel said,  
" Thou show'st churl's breeding, by my head,  
In foul despite of thy fair face !  
Take heart, for to a better place 860  
Thou goest now.—Miller, farewell,  
Nor need'st thou to the neighbours tell  
The noble fortunes of the lad ;  
For, certes, he shall not be glad  
To know them in a year or twain.  
Yet shall thy finding not be vain,  
And thou mayst bless it ; for behold  
This bag wherein is store of gold ;  
Take it and let thy hinds go play,  
And grind no corn for many a day, 870  
For it would buy thy mill and thee."

He turned to go, but pensively  
Stood Michael, for his broken dream  
Doubtful and far away did seem  
Amidst the squire's rough mockeries ;  
And tears were gathering in his eyes.  
But the kind miller's rough farewell  
Rang in his ear ; and Samuel  
Stamped with his foot and plucked his sleeve ;  
So therewithal he turned to leave 880  
His old abode, the quiet place,  
Trembling, with wet and tearful face.

But even as he turned there came  
From out the house the simple dame  
And cast rough arms about the lad,  
Saying, "For that I have been glad  
By means of thee this many a day,  
My mourning heart this hour doth pay.  
But, fair son, may'st thou live in bliss,

And die in peace : remembering this, 890  
When thou art come to high estate,  
That in our house, early and late,  
The happy house that shall be sad,  
Thou hast the best of all we had  
And love unfeigned from us twain,  
Whose hearts thou madest young again,  
Hearts that the quicker old shall grow  
Now thou art gone. ”

“ Good dame, enow, ”

Quoth Samuel, “ the day grows late,  
And sure the King for meat shall wait 900  
Until he see this new-found lord. ”  
He strode away upon that word ;  
And half ashamed, and half afraid,  
Yet eager as his dream he neared,  
Shyly the lad went after him.  
They crossed the stream and by its brim  
Both mounted the great warhorse grey,  
And without word they rode away.

But as along the river's edge  
They went, and brown birds in the sedge 910  
Twittered their sweet and formless tune  
In the fair autumn afternoon,  
And reach by reach the well-known stream  
They passed, again the hopeful dream  
Of one too young to think death near,  
Who scarce had learned the name of fear,  
Remorseful memories put to flight ;  
Lovely the whole world showed and bright.  
Nor did the harsh voice rouse again  
The thought of mockery or of pain, 920  
For other thoughts held Samuel.  
So, riding silently and well,

They reached at last the dusty road  
That led unto the King's abode.  
But Samuel turned away his face  
Therefrom, and at a steady pace  
The great horse thundered o'er the bridge,  
And made on toward the heathy ridge,  
Wherefrom they rode that other day.  
But Michael, noting well the way, 930  
Why thus they went, fell wondering,  
And said aloud, " Dwells then the King,  
Fair sir, as now within the wood ?"

" Young fool, where that it seems him good  
He dwelleth," quoth old Samuel,  
" And now it pleaseth him to dwell  
With the black monks across the wood."

Withal he muttered in his hood,  
" Curst be the King, and thou also,  
Who thrust me out such deeds to do, 940  
When I should bide at home to pray,  
Who draw so nigh my ending day."  
So saying, forth his horse he spurred  
And to himself said yet this word,  
" Yea, yea, and of all days forlorn  
God curse the day when I was born."

Therewith he groaned ; yet saying thus  
His case seemed hard and piteous,  
When he remembered how of old  
Another tale he might have told. 950

So as each thought his own thoughts still,  
The horse began to breast the hill,  
And still they went on higher ground,  
Until as Michael turned him round  
He saw the sunny country-side  
Spread out before him far and wide,  
Golden amidst its waning green,

Joyous with varied life unseen.  
Meanwhile from side to side of them  
The trees began their way to hem, 960  
As still he gazed from tree to tree,  
And when he turned back presently  
He saw before him like a wall  
Uncounted tree-trunks dim and tall.  
Then with their melancholy sound  
The odorous spruce-woods met around  
Those wayfarers, and when he turned  
Once more, far off the sunlight burned  
In star-like spots, while from o'erhead  
Dim twilight through the boughs was shed. 970

Not there as yet had Michael been,  
Nor had he left the meadows green  
Dotted about with spreading trees  
And fresh with sun and rain and breeze,  
For those mirk woods, and still his eyes  
Gazed round about for mysteries.  
Since many an old wife's tale he knew;  
Huge woodcutters in raiment blue,  
The remnant of a mighty race,  
The ancient masters of the place, 980  
And hammering trolls he looked to see,  
And dancers of the faërie,  
Who, as the ancient stories told,  
In front were lovely to behold,  
But empty shells seen from behind.

So on they rode until the wind  
Had died out, stifled by the trees,  
And Michael 'mid those images  
Of strange things made alive by fear,  
Grew drowsy in the forest drear; 990  
Nor noted how the time went past



Until they nigh had reached at last  
The borders of the spruce-tree wood ;  
And with a tingling of the blood  
Samuel bethought him of the day  
When turned about the other way  
He carried him he rode with now.  
For the firs ended on the brow  
Of a rough gravelly hill, and there  
Lay a small valley nowise fair  
Beneath them, clear at first of all  
But brake, till amid rushes tall  
Down in the bottom alders grew  
Crabbed and rough ; and winding through  
The clayey mounds a brook there was  
Oozy and foul, half choked with grass.

1000

There now the squire awhile drew rein,  
And noted how the ground again  
Rose up upon the other side,  
And saw a green glade opening wide  
'Twixt oaks and hollies, and he knew  
Full well what place it led unto ;  
Withal he heard the bittern's boom,  
And though without the fir-wood's gloom  
They now were come, yet red and low  
The sun above the trees did show,  
And in despite of hardihead,  
The old squire had a mortal dread  
Of lying in the wood alone  
When that was done that should be done.

1010

1020

Now Michael, wakened by the wind,  
Clutched tighter at the belt behind,  
And with wide eyes was staring round,  
When Samuel said, " Get to the ground,  
My horse shall e'en sink deep enow,  
Without thy body, in this slough ;

And haste thee, or we both shall lie  
Beneath the trees, and be as dry  
As autumn dew can make us. Haste!  
The time is short for thee to waste." 1030

Then from the horse the boy did glide,  
And slowly down the valley side  
They went, and Michael, wakened now,  
Sang such rude songs as he might know,  
Grown fresh and joyous of his life;  
While Samuel, clutching at the knife  
About his neck that hung, again  
Down in the bottom tightened rein,  
And turning, in a hoarse voice said,  
"My girths are loosening, by my head!  
Come nigh and draw them tighter, lad." 1040

Then Michael stayed his carol glad,  
And nothing little in his mirth  
The other's voice, unto the girth  
Without a word straight set his hand;  
But as with bent head he did stand,  
Straining to tighten what was tight,  
In Samuel's hand the steel flashed bright,  
And fell, deep smitten in his side;  
Then, leaping back, the poor lad cried, 1050  
As if for help, and staggering fell,  
With wide eyes fixed on Samuel;  
Who none the less grown deadly pale,  
Lit down, lest that should not avail  
To slay him, and beside him knelt,  
And since his eyes were closed now, felt  
His heart that beat yet: therewithal  
His hand upon the knife did fall.  
But, ere his fingers clutched it well,  
Far off he seemed to hear a bell, 1060  
And trembling knelt upright again,

And listening, listened not in vain,  
For clear he heard a tinkling sound.  
Then to his horse from off the ground  
He leapt, nor reasoned with his dread,  
But thought the angel of the dead  
Was drawing nigh the slayer to slay,  
Ere scarce the soul had passed away.  
One dreadful moment yet he heard  
That bell, then like a madman spurred  
His noble horse ; that maddened too,  
The close-set fir-wood galloped through,  
Not stayed by any stock or stone.  
Until, the furious race being done,  
Anigh the bridge he fell down dead ;  
And Samuel, mazed with guilt and dread,  
Wandered afoot throughout the night,  
But came, at dawning of the light,  
Half-dead unto the palace gate.

1070

There till the opening did he wait ;  
Then, by the King's own signet-ring,  
He gained the chamber of the King,  
And painfully what he had done  
He told, and how the thing had gone.  
And said withal : " Yet is he dead,  
And surely that which made my dread  
Shall give thee joy : for doubt not aught  
That bell the angels to him brought,  
That he in Abraham's breast might lie—  
So ends, O King, the prophecy."

1080

1090

Nathless the King scowled, ill content,  
And said, " I deemed that I had sent  
A man of war to do my will,  
Who lacked for neither force nor skill,  
And thou com'st with a woman's face,  
Bewildered with thy desperate race,

And made an idiot with thy fear,  
Nor bring'st me any token here!"

Therewith he rose and gat away,  
But brooding on it through that day, 1100  
Thought that all things went not so ill  
As first he deemed, and that he still  
Might leave his old line flourishing.  
Therewith both gold and many a thing  
Unto old Samuel he gave,  
But thereby failed his life to save;  
Who, not so old in years as sin,  
Died ere the winter, and within  
The minster choir was laid asleep,  
With carven saints his head to keep. 1110

And so the days and years went by,  
And still in great felicity  
The King dwelt, wanting only this—  
A son wherewith to share his bliss,  
And reign when he was dead and gone;  
Nor had he daughter, save that one  
Born on the night when Michael first,  
Forlorn, alone, and doubly cursed,  
Felt on him this world's bitter air.

This daughter, midst fair maids most fair, 1120  
Was not yet wed, though at this time,  
Being come unto her maiden's prime,  
She looked upon her eighteenth May.

Midst this her mother passed away,  
Not much lamented of the King,  
Who had the thought of marrying  
Some dame more fertile, and who sent  
A wily man with this intent  
To spy the countries out and find  
Some great king's daughter, wise and kind, 1130

And fresh, and fair, in face and limb,  
In all things a fit mate for him.

So in short time it came to pass  
Again the King well wedded was,  
And hoped once more to have a son.

And when this fair dame he had won,  
A year in peace he dwelt with her,  
Until the time was drawing near  
When first his eyes beheld that foe  
He deemed was dead these years ago. 1140  
Now at that time, as custom was,  
His daughter was about to pass  
Unto a distant house of his,  
Some king had built for worldly bliss  
In ancient days: there, far removed  
From courts or towns, the dame he loved  
The dead king had been wont to see  
Play mid the summer greenery,  
Or like Erigone of old  
Stand in the vineyards girt with gold, 1150  
To queen it o'er the vintagers,  
Half worshipping that face of hers.  
Long years ago these folk were passed,  
Their crimes forgotten, or else cast  
Into the glowing crucible  
Of time, that tempers all things well,  
That maketh pleasure out of pain,  
And out of ruin golden gain ;  
Nathless, unshaken still, there stood  
The towers and ramparts red as blood 1160  
Wherein their lives had passed away ;  
And still the lovely gardens lay  
About them, changed, but smiling still,  
As in past time, on good or ill.

Thither the Princess Cecily  
Must go awhile in peace to be ;  
For now, midst care, and doubt, and toil,  
Proud words drawn back, and half-healed broil,  
The King had found one meet to wed  
His daughter, of great goodlihead, 1170  
Wealth, and unbroken royalty.  
And now he said to her, when she  
Was setting out for that fair place,  
" O daughter, thou shalt see my face  
Before a month is fully gone,  
Nor wilt thou see me then alone ;  
For that man shall be with me then,  
Whom I have chosen from all men  
To give my dearest treasure to.  
Most fain he is to look on you, 1180  
Nor needst thou fear him for thy part,  
Who holdeth many a woman's heart  
As the net holds the silvery fish.  
Farewell—and all things thou may'st wish  
I pray God grant thee. "

Therewithal  
He kissed her, and from out the hall  
She passed, not shamefaced, or afraid  
Of what might happen ; though, indeed,  
Her heart of no man's heart had need  
To make her happy as she thought. 1190

Ever the new sun daily brought  
Fresh joy of life to her bedside ;  
The world before her open wide  
Was spread, a place for joy and bliss.  
Her lips had trembled with no kiss,  
Wherewith love slayeth fear and shame ;  
Her grey eyes, conscious of no blame,

Beheld unmoved the eyes of men ;  
Her hearing grew no dimmer when  
Some unused footstep she might hear ;                   1200  
And unto no man was she dear,  
But as some goddess might have been  
When Greek men worshipped many a queen.

Now with her armed folk forth she rode  
Unto that ancient fair abode,  
And while the lark sung o'er the corn,  
Love gilded not the waning morn :  
And when the sun rose high above,  
High thoughts she thought, but not of love ;  
And when that sun the world did leave,                   1210  
He left no love to light the eve.  
The moon no melancholy brought,  
The dawn no vain, remorseful thought.  
But all untroubled her sweet face  
Passed 'neath the gate of that old place,  
And there her bridegroom she abode.

But scarce was she upon the road  
Ere news unto the King was brought  
That Peter, the old Abbot, sought  
To see him, having newly come                   1220  
From the wild place that was his home  
Across the Forest ; so the King  
Bade him to enter, well willing  
To hear what he might have to say ;  
Who, entering the hall straightway,  
Had with him an old, reverend man,  
The sub-prior, Father Adrian,  
And five monks more, and therewithal  
Ten of his folk, stout men and tall,  
Who bore armed staves and coats of fence.                   1230

So when he came to audience,  
He prayed the King of this or that,  
Whereof my tale-teller forgat,  
And graciously the King heard all,  
And said at last, "Well, what may fall,  
Thou go'st not hence, fair lord, to-day;  
Unless in vain a king must pray,  
Thou and thy monks shall eat with me;  
While feast thine axe-men merrily."

Withal, he eyed the Abbot's folk 1240  
In careless mood, then once more spoke,  
"Tall men thou feedest, by the rood!  
Lord Abbot, come they from the wood?  
Dwell many more such thereabout?  
Fain were I such should swell the shout  
When I am armed, and rank meets rank."

But as he spoke his loud voice sank  
Wavering, nor heard he aught at all  
Of the faint noises of the hall,  
Or what the monk in answer said; 1250  
For, looking from a steel-clad head,  
Those eyes again did he behold,  
That erst from 'neath the locks of gold  
Kindly and bold, but soft with awe,  
Beneath the apple-boughs he saw.

But when for sure this thing he knew,  
Pale to the very lips he grew;  
Till gathering heart within a while  
With the faint semblance of a smile,  
He seemed to note the Abbot's words 1260  
That he heard not; then from the lords  
He turned, and facing Michael said,  
"Raise up the steel cap from thine head,  
That I may see if thou look'st bold;  
Methinks, I know thy face of old,



Whence com'st thou?"

Michael lifted straight

From off his brow the steel cap's weight,  
And showed the bright locks curling round  
His fresh and ruddy face, sun-browned,  
And in a voice clear as a bell

1270

Told all his story, till he fell  
Sore wounded in that dismal vale,  
And said withal, "My lord, the tale  
Of what came after, none knoweth  
Better than he, who, from ill death  
Saved me that tide, and made me man,  
My lord, the sub-prior Adrian."

"Speak on then, father," quoth the King,  
Making as he was still hearkening.

"My lord," said Adrian, "I, who then

1280

Was but a server of poor men  
Outside our Abbey walls, one day  
Was called by one in poor array,  
A charcoal-burner's lad, who said  
That soon his father would be dead,  
And that of all things he would have  
His rights, that he his soul might save.

I made no tarrying at that word,  
But took between mine hands the Lord,  
And bade the boy bear forth the bell;

1290

For though few folk there were to tell  
Who passed that way, nathless, I trow  
The beasts were glad that news to know.

"Well, by the pinewood's skirts we went  
While through its twilight the bell sent  
A heavenly tinkling; but the lad  
'Gan telling me of fears he had  
Of elves who dwell within the wood.

I chid him thereat, as was good,  
Bidding him note Whom in mine hands 1300  
I held, The Ransom of all Lands.  
But as the firewood's dim twilight  
Waxed into day, and fair and bright  
The evening sun showed through the trees,  
Our ears fanned by the evening breeze  
The galloping of horse-hoofs heard,  
Wherewith my page hung back afeard  
Of elves and such-like; but I said,  
'Wilt thou thy father should be deed  
Ere we can reach him? O my son, 1310  
Fear not that aught can stay This One.'  
"Therewith I smote my mule, and he  
Ran forward with me hastily  
As fearing to be left behind.  
Well, as we went, what should we find  
Down by the stream, but this my son,  
Who seemed as though his days were done;  
For in his side a knife there stood  
Where from ran out a stream of blood,  
Soaking the grass and water-mint; 1320  
Then, I dismounting, we by dint  
Of all our strength, the poor youth laid  
Upon my mule, and down a glade  
Of oaks and hollies then we passed,  
And reached the woodman's home at last;  
A poor hut, built of wattled wood,  
And by its crooked gable stood  
A ruinous shed, unroofed and old,  
That beasts of burden once did hold.  
—Thyself, my lord, mayst know it well. 1330  
Since thereabout the wild swine dwell;  
And hart, and hind, and roe are there—  
So the lad's wounds I staunched with care

Forthwith, and then the man I shrived,  
Who none the less got well and lived  
For many a day: then back I went  
And the next day our leech I sent  
With drugs to tend upon the lad,  
Who soon was as he ne'er had had  
A hurt at all: and he being well 1340  
We took him in our house to dwell,  
And taught him letters, and, indeed,  
Before long, Latin could he read  
As well as I; but hath no will  
To turn unto religion still.

Yet is he good and doth no wrong;  
And being thereto both hale and strong,  
My lord, the Abbot, sayeth of him,  
'He shall serve God with heart and limb,  
Not heart and voice.' Therefore, my lord, 1350  
Thou seest him armed with spear and sword  
For their defence who feed him still,  
Teach him, and guard his soul from ill.  
Ho, Michael! hast thou there with thee  
The fair-wrought knife I first did see  
Deep in thy side?—there, show it now  
Unto the King, that he may know  
Our tale is not a fabled thing."

Withal the King, as one listening,  
With his thin, anxious face and pale, 1360  
Sat leaning forward through this tale,  
Scarce noting here and there a word.  
But all being told, at last he heard  
His own voice changed, and harsh, and low,  
That said, "Fair lord, I fain would know,  
Since this your man-at-arms seems true,  
What thing will he be worth to you;  
For better had he wear my rose

Than loiter in your Abbey-close,  
Poring o'er books no man can read." 1370

"O sire !" the monk said, "if thy need  
Be great of such men, let him go;  
My men-at-arms need make no show  
Of fairness, nor should ladies miss,  
E'en as thou say'st, such men as this. "

Laughing he spoke; the King the while  
His pale face puckering to a smile;  
Then, as in some confused dream,  
In Michael's hand he saw the gleam  
Of that same steel remembered well, 1380  
The gift he gave to Samuel;

Drawn from his father's ancient chest  
To do that morn his own behest.  
And as he now beheld its sheen,  
The twining stem of gold and green,  
The white scroll with the letters black,—  
*Strike ! for no dead man cometh back !*  
He hardened yet his heart once more,  
And grown unhappy as before,  
When last he had that face in sight, 1310  
Brought now the third time to the light,  
Once more was treacherous, fierce, and fell.

Now was the Abbot feasted well  
With all his folk, then went away,  
But Michael clad in rich array  
Became the King's man, and was thought  
By all most happy to be brought  
Unto such hopeful fair estate.

For ten days yet the King did wait,  
Which past, for Michael did he send, 1400  
And he being come, said to him, "Friend,  
Take now this letter from my hand

And go unto our southern land;  
My captain Hugh shall go with thee  
For one day's journey, then shall he  
Tell thee which way thou hast to ride;  
The third day thence about noontide  
If thou dost well, thou shouldst be close  
Unto my Castle of the Rose  
Where dwells my daughter; needs it is  
That on man living should see this  
Until that thou within my wall  
Hast given it to the seneschal;  
Be wise and wary then, that thou  
Mayst think of this that happeneth now  
As birthday to thine high estate."

1410

So said he, knowing not that fate  
Was dealing otherwise than he.

But Michael going, presently  
Met Hugh, a big man rough and black,  
And who of nought but words had lack;  
With him he mounted, and set forth  
And daylong rode on from the north.

1420

Now if the King had hope that Hugh  
Some deed like Samuel's might do  
I know not; certes nought he said  
To that hard heart and narrow head,  
Who knew no wiles but wiles of war,  
And was as true as such men are;  
Yet had there been a tale to tell

1430

If Michael had not held him well,  
And backward still the wrath had turned  
Wherewith his heart not seldom burned  
At scornful words his fellow said,

At last they reached cross ways that led  
One west, one southward still, whereat  
Hugh, taking off his feathered hat,

Bowed low in scorn, and said, "Fair sir,  
Unto the westward must I spur,  
While you go southward, soon to get, 1440  
I doubt not, an earl's coronet;  
Farewell, my lord, and yet beware  
Thou dost not at my lady stare  
Too hard, lest thou shouldst plumb the moat,  
Or have a halter round thy throat."

But Michael to his scoff said nought,  
But upon high things set his thought  
As his departing hooves he heard,  
And still betwixt the hedgerows spurred;  
And when the twilight was o'erpast 1450  
At a small inn drew rein at last,  
And slept that night as such folk can;  
And while next morn the thrushes ran  
Their first course through the autumn dew,  
The gossamers did he dash through,  
And on his way rode steadily  
The live-long day, nor yet was he  
Alone, as well might be that day,  
Since a fair town was in his may.  
Stout hinds he passed, and yeomen good, 1560  
Some friar in his heavy hood,  
And white-coifed housewives mounted high,  
Above their mounds, while merrily  
The well-shod damsel trudged along  
Beside them, sending forth a song  
As little taught as is a bird's;  
And good men, good wives, priests, and herds,  
And merry maids failed not to send  
Good wishes for his journey's end  
Athwart him as still on he sped, 1470  
Free from all evil thoughts or dread.

Withal again the day went by,  
And in that city's hostelry  
He slept, and by the dawn of day  
Next morn again was on his way,  
And leaving the scarce wakened street  
The newly risen sun did greet  
With cheerful heart. His way wound on  
Still up and up till he had won  
Up to a great hill's chalky brow, 1480  
Whence looking back he saw below  
The town spread out, church, square, and street,  
And baily, crawling up the feet  
Of the long yew-besprinkled hill;  
And in the fragrant air and still,  
Seeming to gain new life from it,  
The doves from roof to roof did flit:  
The early fires sent up their smoke  
That seemed to him to tell of folk  
New wakened unto great delight: 1490  
For he upon that morning bright  
So joyous felt, so free from pain,  
He seemed as he were born again  
Into some new immortal state  
That knew no envy, fear, or hate.

Now the road turned to his left hand  
And led him through a table-land,  
Windy and barren of all grain;  
But where a hollow specked the plain  
The yew-trees hugged the sides of it, 1500  
And mid them did the woodlark flit  
Or sang\* well sheltered from the wind;  
And all about the sheep did find  
Sweet grass, the while the shepherd's song  
Rang clear as Michael sped along.

Long time he rode, till suddenly,

When now the sun was broad and high,  
From out a hollow where the yew  
Still guarded patches of the dew,  
He found at last that he had won 1510  
That highland's edge, and gazed upon  
A valley that beneath the haze  
Of that most fair of autumn days,  
Showed glorious; fair with golden sheaves,  
Rich with the darkened autumn-leaves,  
Gay with the water-meadows green,  
The bright blue streams that lay between,  
The miles of beauty stretched away  
From that bleak hill-side bare and grey,  
Till white cliffs over slopes of vine 1520  
Drew 'gainst the sky a broken line.  
And 'twixt the vineyards and the stream  
Michael saw gilded spirelets gleam;  
For, hedged with many a flowery close,  
There lay the Castle of the Rose,  
His hurried journey's aim and end.

Then downward he began to wend,  
And 'twixt the flowery hedges sweet  
He heard the hook smite down the wheat,  
And murmur of the unseen folk; 1530  
But when he reached the stream that broke  
The golden plain, but leisurely  
He passed the bridge, for he could see  
The masters of that ripening realm,  
Cast down beneath an ancient elm  
Upon a little strip of grass,  
From hand to hand the pitcher pass,  
While on the turf beside them lay  
The ashen-handled sickles grey.  
The matters of their cheer between: 1540





But not for either good or ill  
Shall he see one of all those days;  
On through the quivering noontide haze  
He rode, and now on either hand  
Heavy with fruit the trees did stand;  
Nor had he ridden long, ere he  
The red towers of the house could see  
Grey on the wind-beat southern side:  
And soon the gates thrown open wide  
He was, the long-fixed drawbridge down,  
The moat with lilies overgrown,  
Midst which the gold-scaled fishes lay:  
Such peace was there for many a day.

1580

And deep within the archway's shade  
The warder on his cloak was laid,  
Dozing, one hand upon a harp.  
And nigh him a great golden carp  
Lay stiff, with all his troubles done,  
Drawn from the moat ere yet the sun  
Was high, and nigh him was his bane,  
An angling rod of Indian cane.

1590

Now hearing Michael's horse-hooves smite  
The causeway, shading from the light  
His eyes, as one scarce yet awake,  
He made a shift his spear to take,  
And, eyeing Michael's badge the while,  
Rose up, and with a lazy smile,  
Said, "Ho! fair sir, abide, abide,  
And show why hitherward ye ride  
Unto my lady's royal home."

1600

Said Michael, "From the King I come,  
As by my badge ye well may see;  
And letters have I here with me  
To give my lord the Seneschal."

"Yea," said the man, "but in the hall

He feasteth now; what haste is there? 1610  
 Certes full quickly cometh care;  
 And sure I am he will not read  
 Thy letters, or to aught give heed  
 Till he has played out all the play,  
 And every guest has gone away;  
 So thou, O damoiseau, must wait;  
 Tie up thine horse anigh the gate,  
 And sit with me, and thou shalt hear,  
The Kaiser lieth on his bier.

Thou laughest—hast thou never heard 1620  
 Of this same valorous Red Beard,  
 And how he died? Well, I can sing  
 Of many another dainty thing,  
 Thou wilt not a long while forget,  
 The budget is not empty yet.  
 —Peter! I think thou mockest me,  
 But thou art young and fair perdie,  
 I wish thee luck—well, thou mayest go  
 And feel the afternoon wind blow  
 Within Dame Bertha's pleasance here; 1630  
 She who was held so lief and dear,  
 All this was built but for her sake,  
 Who made the hearts of men to ache;  
 And dying full of years and shame  
 Yet left an unforgotten name—  
 God rest her soul!"

Michael the while  
 Hearkened his talking with a smile.  
 Then said, "O friend, I think to hear  
 Both 'The King lieth on his bier'  
 And many another song of thee, 1640  
 Ere I depart; but now show me  
 The pleasance of the ancient queen;  
 For these red towers above the green

Show like the gates of Paradise,  
That surely somewhere through them lies."

Then said the warder, "That may be  
If thou know'st what may come to thee—  
When past the drawbridge thou hast gone,  
Upon the left three steps of stone  
Lead to a path beneath the wall 1650  
Of the great court, that folk now call  
The falconer's path, nor canst thou miss  
Going thereby, to find the bliss  
Thou look'st for, since the the path ends there,  
And through a wicket gilded fair  
The garden lies where thou wouldst be:  
Nor will I fail to come to thee  
Whene'er my Lord the Seneschal  
Shall pass well fed from out the hall."

Then Michael, thanking him, passed on, 1660  
And soon the gilded wicket won,  
And entered that pleasance sweet,  
And wandered there with wary feet  
And open mouth, as though he deemed  
That in some lovely dream he dreamed,  
And feared to wake to common day,  
So fair was all; and e'en decay  
Brought there but pensive loveliness,  
Where autumn those old walls did bless  
With wealth of fruit, and through the grass 1670  
Unscared the spring-born thrush did pass,  
Who yet knew nought of winter-tide.

So wandering, to a fountain's side  
He came, and o'er the basin hung,  
Watching the fishes, as he sung  
Some song remembered from of old,  
Ere yet the miller won that gold.  
But soon made drowsy with his ride,

And the warm hazy autumn-tide,  
And many a musical sweet sound, 1680  
He cast him down upon the ground,  
And watched the glittering water leap,  
Still singing low, nor thought to sleep.

But scarce three minutes had gone by  
Before, as if in mockery,  
The starling chattered o'er his head,  
And nothing he remembered,  
Nor dreamed of aught that he had seen.

Meanwhile unto that garden green  
Had come the Princess, and with her 1690  
A maiden that she held right dear,  
Who knew the inmost of her mind.  
Now those twain, as the scented wind  
Played with their raiment or their hair,  
Had late been running here and there,  
Chasing each other merrily,  
As maids do, thinking no one by ;  
But now, well wearied therewithal,  
Had let their gathered garments fall  
About their feet, and slowly went : 1700  
And through the leaves a murmur sent,  
As of two happy doves that sing  
The soft returning of the spring,

Now of these twain the Princess spoke  
The less, but into laughter broke  
Not seldom, and would redden oft,  
As on her lips her fingers soft  
She laid, as still the other maid,  
Half grave, half smiling, follies said.

So in their walk they drew anigh 1710  
That fountain in the midst, whereby  
Lay Michael sleeping, dreaming nought

Of such fair things so nigh him brought.  
 They, when the fountain shaft was past,  
 Beheld him on the ground down-cast,  
 And stopped at first, until the maid  
 Stepped lightly forward to the shade,  
 And when she had gazed there awhile  
 Came running back again, a smile  
 Parting her lips, and her bright eyes 1720  
 Afire with many fantasies ;  
 And ere the Lady Cecily  
 Could speak a word, "Hush! hush!" said she;  
 "Did I not say that he would come  
 To woo thee in thy peaceful home  
 Before thy father brought him here?  
 Come, and behold him, have no fear!  
 The great bell would not wake him now,  
 Right in his ears".

"Nay, what dost thou?"

The Princess said; "let us go hence: 1730  
 Thou know'st I give obedience  
 To what my father bids; but I  
 A maid full fain would live and die,  
 Since I am born to be a queen".

"Yea, yea, for such as thou hast seen,  
 That may be well," the other said.

"But come now, come; for by my head  
 This one must be from Paradise;  
 Come swiftly then, if thou art wise  
 Ere aught can snatch him back again." 1740

She caught her hand, and not in vain  
 She prayed; for now some kindly thought  
 To Cecily's brow fair colour brought,  
 And quickly 'gan her heart to beat  
 As love drew near those eyes to greet,  
 Who knew him not till that sweet hour.

So over the fair, pink-edged flower,  
 Softly she stepped; but when she came  
 Anigh the sleeper, lovely shame  
 Cast a soft mist before her eyes 1750  
 Full filled of many fantasies.  
 But when she saw him lying there  
 She smiled to see her mate so fair;  
 And in her heart did Love begin  
 To tell his tale, nor thought she sin  
 To gaze on him that was her own,  
 Not doubting he was come alone  
 To woo her, whom midst arms and gold  
 She deemed she should at first behold;  
 And with that thought love grew again 1760  
 Until departing was a pain,  
 Though fear grew with that growing love,  
 And with her lingering footsteps strove  
 As from the place she turned to go,  
 Sighing and murmuring words full low.  
 But as her raiment's hem she raised,  
 And for her merry fellow gazed  
 Shamefaced and changed, she met her eyes  
 Turned grave and sad with ill surprise;  
 Who while the Princess mazed did stand 1770  
 Had drawn from Michael's loosened band  
 The King's scroll, which she held out now  
 To Cecily, and whispered low,  
 "Read, and do quickly what thou wilt.  
 Sad, sad! such fair life to be spilt:  
 Come further first."

With that they stepped  
 A pace or two from where he slept,  
 And then she read,

"Lord Seneschal,  
 On thee and thine may all good fall;  
 Greeting hereby the King sendeth, 1780

*And biddeth thee to put to death  
His enemy who beareth this;  
And as thou lovest life and bliss,  
And all thy goods thou holdest dear,  
Set thou his head upon a spear  
A good half furlong from the gate.  
Our coming hitherward to wait—  
So perish the King's enemies !''*

She read, and scarcely had her eyes  
Seen clear her father's name and seal,  
Ere all love's power her heart did feel,  
That drew her back in spite of shame,  
To him who was not e'en a name  
Unto her a short hour ago.  
Panting she said, "Wait thou alone  
Beside him, watch him carefully  
And let him sleep if none draw nigh;  
If of himself he waketh, then  
Hide him until I come again,  
When thou hast told him of the snare—  
If thou betrayest me beware !  
For death shall be the least of all  
The ills that on thine head shall fall—  
What say I ? Thou art dear to me,  
And doubly dear now shalt thou be,  
Thou shalt have power and majesty,  
And be more queen in all than I —  
Few words are best, be wise, be wise !"

1790

1800

Withal she turned about her eyes  
Once more, and swiftly as a man  
Betwixt the garden trees she ran,  
Until, her own bower reached at last,  
She made good haste, and quickly passed  
Unto her secret treasury.  
There, hurrying since the time was nigh

1810



For folk to come from meat, she took  
From 'twixt the leaves of a great book  
A royal scroll, signed, sealed, but blank,  
Then, with a hand that never shrank  
Or trembled, she the scroll did fill 1820

With these words, writ with clerkly skill,—

*“Unto the Seneschal, Sir Rafe,  
Who holdeth our fair castle safe,  
Greeting and health! O well-beloved,  
Know that at this time we are moved  
To wed our daughter, so we send  
Him who bears this, our perfect friend,  
To be her bridegroom; so do thou  
Ask nought of him, since well we know  
His race and great nobility,  
And how he is most fit to be*

1830

*Our son; therefore make no delay,  
But wed the twain upon the day  
Thou readest this: and see that all  
Take oath to him, whate'er shall fall,  
To do his bidding as our heir;  
So doing still be lief and dear  
As I have held thee yet to be.”*

She cast the pen down hastily  
At that last letter, for she heard 1840  
How even now the people stirred  
Within the hall: nor dared she think  
What bitter potion she must drink  
If now she failed, so falsely bold  
That life or death did she enfold  
Within its cover, making shift  
To seal it with her father's gift,  
A signet of cornelian.

Then swiftly down the stairs she ran  
And reached the garden; but her fears 1850

Brought shouts and thunder to her ears,  
That were but lazy words of men  
Full-fed, far off; nay, even when  
Her limbs caught up her flying gown  
The noise seemed loud enough to drown  
The twitter of the autumn birds,  
And her own muttered breathless words  
That to her heart seemed loud indeed.

Yet therewithal she made good speed  
And reached the fountain seen of none 1860  
Where yet abode her friend alone,  
Watching the sleeper, who just now  
Turned in his sleep and muttered low.  
Therewith fair Agnes saying nought  
From out her hand the letter caught;  
And, while she leaned against the stone,  
Stole up to Michael's side alone,  
And with a cool, unshrinking hand  
Thrust the new scroll deep in his band,  
And turned about unto her friend; 1870  
Who having come unto the end  
Of all her courage, trembled there  
With face upturned for fresher air,  
And parted lips grown grey and pale,  
And limbs that now began to fail,  
And hands where from all strength had gone,  
Scarce fresher than the blue-veined stone  
That quivering still she strove to clutch.

But when she felt her lady's touch,  
Feebly she said, "Go! let me die 1880  
And end this sudden misery  
That in such wise has wrapped my life.  
I am too weak for such a strife,  
So sick I am with shame and fear;  
Would thou hadst never brought me here!"

But Agnes took her hand and said,  
"Nay, Queen, and must we three be dead  
Because thou fearest? all is safe  
If boldly thou wilt face Sir Rafe."

So saying, did she draw her hence, 1890  
Past tree and bower and high pleached fence  
Unto the garden's further end,  
And left her there and back did wend,  
And from the house made haste to get  
A gilded maund wherein she set  
A flask of ancient island wine,  
Ripe fruits and wheaten manchets fine,  
And many such a delicate  
As goddesses in old time ate,  
Ere Helen was a Trojan queen;  
So passing through the garden green  
She cast her eager eyes again  
Upon the spot where he had lain,  
But found it empty, so sped on  
Till she at last the place had won  
Where Cecily lay weak and white  
Within that fair bower of delight.

Her straight she made to eat and drink,  
And said, "See now thou dost not shrink  
From this thy deed; let love slay fear 1910  
Now, when thy life shall grow so dear,  
Each minute should seem loss to thee  
If thou for thy felicity  
Couldst stay to count them; for I say,  
This day shall be thy happy day."

Therewith she smiled to see the wine  
Embraced by her fingers fine;  
And her sweet face grow bright again  
With sudden pleasure after pain.

Again she spoke, "What is this word 1920

That dreaming, I perchance have heard,  
But certainly remember well ?  
That some old soothsayer did tell  
Strange things unto my lord, the King,  
That on thy hand the spousal ring  
No Kaiser's son, no King should set,  
But one a peasant did beget—  
What say'st thou ?”

But the Queen flushed red ;  
“ Such fables I have heard,” she said ;  
“ And thou—is it such scathe to me, 1930  
The bride of such a man to be ? ”  
“ Nay,” said she, “ God will have him King ;  
How shall we do a better thing  
With this or that one than He can ?  
God's friend must be a goodly man. ”

But with that word she heard the sound  
Of folk who through the mazes wound  
Bearing the message; then she said,  
“ Be strong, pluck up thine hardihead,  
Speak little, so shall all be well, 1940  
For now our own tale will they tell. ”

And even as she spoke they came,  
And all the green place was aflame  
With golden raiment of the lords;  
While Cecily, noting not their words,  
Rose up to go; and for her part  
By this had fate so steeled her heart,  
Scarce otherwise she seemed, than when  
She passed before the eyes of men  
At tourney or high festival. 1950  
But when they now had reached the hall,  
And up its very steps they went,  
Her head a little down she bent;  
Nor raised it till the dais was gained

For fear that love some monster feigned  
 To be a god, and she should be  
 Smit by her own bolt wretchedly.  
 But at the rustling, crowded dais  
 She gathered heart her eyes to raise,  
 And there beheld her love indeed, 1960  
 Clad in her father's serving weed,  
 But proud, and flushed, and calm withal,  
 Fearless of aught that might befall,  
 Nor too astonished, for he thought,—  
 "From point to point my life is brought  
 Through wonders till it comes to this;  
 And trouble cometh after bliss,  
 And I will bear all as I may,  
 And ever as day passeth day,  
 My life will hammer from the twain, 1970  
 Forging a long enduring chain."

But midst these thoughts their young eyes met,  
 And every word did he forget  
 Wherewith men name unhappiness  
 As read again those words did bless  
 With double blessings his glad ears.  
 And if she trembled with her fears,  
 And if with doubt, and love, and shame,  
 The rosy colour went and came  
 In her sweet cheeks and smooth bright brow, 1980  
 Little did folk think of it now,  
 But as of maiden modesty,  
 Shamefaced to see the bridegroom nigh.

And now when Rafe the Seneschal  
 Had read the message down the Hall,  
 And turned to her, quite calm again,  
 Her face had grown, and with no pain  
 She raised her serious eyes to his  
 Grown soft and pensive with his bliss,

And said,  
 "Prince, thou art welcome here, 1990  
 Where all my father loves is dear,  
 And full trust do I put in thee,  
 For that so great nobility  
 He knoweth in thee; be as kind  
 As I would be to thee, and find  
 A happy life from day to day,  
 Till all our days are past away."

What more than found the bystanders  
 He found within this speech of hers,  
 I know not; some faint quivering 2000  
 In the last words; some little thing  
 That checked the cold words' even flow;  
 But yet they set his heart aglow,  
 And he in turn said eagerly:—

"Surely I count it nought to die  
 For him who brought me unto this;  
 For thee, who givest me this bliss;  
 Yea, even dost me such a grace  
 To look with kind eyes in my face,  
 And send sweet music to my ears." 2010

But at his words she, mazed with tears,  
 Seemed faint, and failing quickly, when  
 Above the low hum of the men  
 Uprose the sweet bells' sudden clang,  
 As men unto the chapel rang;  
 While just outside the singing folk  
 Into most heavenly carols broke;  
 And going softly up the hall  
 Boys bore aloft the yerges tall  
 Before the Bishop's gold-clad head. 2020

Then forth his bride young Michael led,  
 And nought to him seemed good or bad  
 Except the lovely hand he had;

But she the while was murmuring low,  
"If he could know, if he could know,  
What love, what love, his love should be!"

But while mid mirth and minstrelsy  
The ancient Castle of the Rose  
Such pageant to the autumn shows,  
The King sits ill at ease at home, 2030  
For in these days the news is come  
That he who in his line should wed  
Lies in his own town stark and dead,  
Slain in a tumult in the street.

Brooding on this he deemed it meet,  
Since nigh the day was come, when she  
Her bridegroom's visage looked to see,  
To hold the settled day with her,  
And bid her at the least to wear  
Dull mourning guise for gold and white. 2040  
So on another morning bright,  
When the whole promised month was past  
He drew anigh the place at last  
Where Michael's dead head, looking down  
Upon the highway with a frown,  
He doubted not at last to see.  
So 'twixt the fruitful greenery  
He rode, scarce touched by care the while,  
Humming a roundel with a smile.

Withal, ere yet he drew anigh, 2050  
He heard their watch-horn sound from high,  
Nor wondered, for their wont was so,  
And well his banner they might know  
Amidst the stubble lands afar:  
But now a distant point of war  
He seemed to hear, and bade draw rein,  
But listening cried, "Push on again!  
They do but send forth minstrelsy

Because my daughter thinks to see  
The man who lieth on his bier. " 2060  
So on they passed, till sharp and clear  
They heard the pipe and shrill fife sound;  
And restlessly the King glanced round  
To see what he had striven for,  
The crushing of that Sage's lore,  
The last confusion of that fate.

But drawn still nigher to the gate  
They turned a sharp bend of the road,  
And saw the pageant that abode  
The solemn coming of the King. 2070

For first on each side, maids did sing,  
Dressed in gold raiment; then there came  
The minstrels in their coats of flame;  
And then the many-coloured lords,  
The knights' spears, and the swordmen's swords,  
Backed by the glittering wood of bills.

So now, presaging many ills,  
The King drew rein, yet none the less  
He shrank not from his hardiness,  
But thought, " Well, at the worst I die, 2080  
And yet perchance long life may lie  
Before me—I will hold my peace;  
The dumb man's borders still increase. "

But as he strengthened thus his heart  
He saw the crowd before him part,  
And down the long melodious lane,  
Hand locked in hand there; passed the twain,  
As fair as any earth has found,  
Clad as kings' children are, and crowned.  
Behind them went the chiefest lords, 2090  
And two old knights with sheathed swords  
The banners of the Kingdom bore.

But now the King had pondered sore,



By when they reached him, though, indeed,  
The time was short unto his need,  
Betwixt his heart's first startled pang  
And those old banner-bearers' clang  
Anigh his saddle-bow: but he  
Across their heads scowled heavily,  
Not saying aught awhile: at last, 2100  
Ere any glance at them he cast,  
He said, "Whence come ye? what are ye?  
What play is this ye play to me?"

None answered,—Cecily, faint and white,  
The rather Michael's hand clutched tight,  
And seemed to speak, but not one word  
The nearest to her could have heard.  
Then the King spoke again,—“Sir Rafe,  
Meseems this youngling came here safe  
A week ago?”

“Yea, sir,” he said; 2110  
“Therefore the twain I straight did wed,  
E'en as thy letters bound me to.”  
“And thus thou diddest well to do,”  
The King said. “Tell me on what day  
Her old life she did put away.”

“Sire, the eleventh day this is  
Since that they gained their earthly bliss,  
Quoth old Sir Rafe. The King said nought,  
But with his head bowed down in thought  
Stood a long while; but at the last 2120  
Upward a smiling face he cast,  
And cried aloud above the folk,  
“Shout for the joining of the yoke  
Betwixt these twain! And thou, fair lord,  
Who dost so well my every word,  
Nor makest doubt of anything,  
Wear thou the collar of thy King;

And a duke's banner, cut foursquare,  
Henceforth shall men before thee bear  
In tourney and in stricken field. 2130

"But this mine heir shall bear my shield,  
Carry my banner, wear my crown,  
Ride equal with me through my town,  
Sit on the same step of the throne;  
In nothing will I reign alone;  
Nor be ye with him discontent,  
For that with little ornament  
Of gold and folk to you he came;  
For he is of an ancient name  
That needeth not the clink of gold— 2140  
The ancientest the world doth hold;  
For in the fertile Asian land,  
Where great Damascus now doth stand,  
Ages ago his line was born,  
Ere yet men knew the gift of corn;  
And there, anigh to Paradise,  
His ancestors grew stout and wise;  
And certes he from Asia bore  
No little of their piercing lore.

"Look then to have great happiness, 2150  
For every wrong shall he redress."

Then did the people's shouting drown  
His clatter as he leapt adown;  
And taking in each hand a hand  
Of the two lovers, now did stand  
Betwixt them on the flower-strewn way,  
And to himself meanwhile 'gan say,—

"How many an hour might I have been  
Right merry in the gardens green;  
How many a glorious day had I 2160  
Made happy with some victory;  
What noble deeds I might have done,

What bright renown my deeds have won;  
What blessings would have made me glad;  
What little burdens had I had;  
What calmness in the hope of praise;  
What joy of well-accomplished days,  
If I had let these things alone;

Nor sought to sit upon my throne  
Like God between the cherubim.

2170

But now—but now, my days wax dim,  
And all this fairness have I tost  
Unto the winds, and all have lost  
For nought, for nought! yet will I strive  
My little end of life to live;  
Nor will I look behind me more,  
Nor forward to the doubtful shore. ”

With that he made the sign to turn,  
And straight the autumn air did burn  
With many a point of steel and gold;  
And through the trees the carol rolled  
Once more, until the autumn thrush  
Far off 'gan twittering on his bush,  
Made mindful of the long-lived spring.

2180

So mid sweet song a tabouring,  
And shouts amid the apple-grove,  
And soft caressing of his love,  
Began the new King Michael's reign.  
Nor will the poor folk see again  
A king like him on any throne,  
Or such good deeds to all men done;  
For then, as saith the chronicle,  
It was the time, as all men tell,  
When scarce a man would stop to gaze  
At gold crowns hung above the ways.

2190

# THE MAN BORN TO BE KING.

## NOTES.

Line 1. In days of old, In ancient times.

L. 2. Wide lands, A great empire.

Nor lacked for gold, And had plenty of money.

Nor lacked, And did not lack *i. e.* had plenty of. (Here *nor*=*and not*). Here we have an illustration of the use of the "figure of speech" called *litotes* or *meiosis*, which consists in softening a statement for greater *emphasis*, or expressing it in milder or *negative* terms for greater effect; (*e. g.* not otherwise=rather foolish).

Nor honour, Nor *lacked for honour i. e.* was a King of great renown.

His days.....days, His reign was an era (*i. e.* a period) of great prosperity.

So peaceable.....days, Because his empire enjoyed such a deep peace.

While others, While other Kingdoms or Empires

Wrapt in war etc., (Adjective phrase qualifying *Others*)  
Being involved in war.

Fell ever.....worse, Steadily got worse and worse; got nearer and nearer to ruin.

His city, The capital of this King.

Was the nurse of, Was like a guardian or *foster-mother* to *i. e.* fostered and encouraged the growth of. (The capital of the King is here described as the *nurse* of learning or culture. The word *nurse* is used as a metaphor. The meaning is that as a *nurse* takes care of a growing child, this city took care of and promoted learning. The same idea is expressed by the Latin expression *alma mater* which is applied to schools, colleges, or universities with reference to the pupils educated in those institutions. "*Alma mater*" means a

kindly mother or a *foster-mother* and the *pupils* educated by the institutions are described as *alumni* i. e. *foster-children* of the institution. The word *pupil*, literally means a *ward* i. e. one who is placed under the guardianship of his *alma mater*).

Of all.....lore, Of all the learning (i. e. the various arts and sciences) that was known in those times.

None were driven.....anything, No man who was well-versed in any art or science was turned out or driven away, if he came to ask for patronage, i. e. the King accorded his patronage to every man of learning who called at his court; all men of merit received a hospitable welcome from the King.

Lore, Learning.

That seemed well etc. : Adjectival clause to "none" in l. 10.

Well skilled, Well versed ; expert.

So of.....King, Thus he was a king among sages.

And gat, He picked up knowledge from all learned men, different branches of knowledge from different persons.

Gat, (obsolete) got. (*Gat* is an archaic form of *got*).

Lordless, Without a king or ruler i. e. a land in a state of *anarchy*; many countries which were in a state of anarchy and confusion.

Troubled land, Countries in misery and confusion.

Fell.....hand, Were very glad to pass under his firm rule.

Scarce loth, Not unwillingly i. e. with great pleasure.

(This is another instance of the figure of *meiosis*.)

L. 13-14: And from.....hand: The student should notice the frequent use of the letters *l*, *m*, *t*, and *d* in these verses, especially the letter *l* in verses 14 and 15. Similarly in verses 6 and 7, the letters *r* and *w* are frequently used. The use of the same or similar letters or sounds in a verse or group of verses produces an effect which is called *assonance*, and it is an important part of what is called *poetic diction* i. e. that part of the style of poetry which refers to the poet's command over language and vocabulary.

L. 17. **Midst this**, In this state of things.

**It chanced**, It happened.

**Clad.....array**, Clothed in his rich gold-embroidered dress.

**He held**; He celebrated.

**Nigh him**, (obsolete) Near him.

L. 21. **Beheld**, He beheld (*He* is understood).

**Sages**, Scholars ; the learned men of his Court.

L. 21. **Most and least**, The greatest and least important of learned men.

**Sitting.....feast**, Banqueting with the king with all the honour due to them. (This picture of the King feasting among his learned men will remind the Indian student of the Rajah Bhoja and the learned men of his court, called the nine jewels of his *darbar*).

**But mid.....faces**, In the midst of the familiar faces.

**Wizened**, Withered ; shrivelled.

**Wan**, Pale.

**From lapse of years**, Owing to age.

**Face grown.....years**, His face had a grayish hue, which was not to be confounded with the paleness due to his age. (That is his grayish complexion was due to some other cause than the natural paleness of old age).

**Bald as.....tree**, He had lost his hair, as in winter, trees lose their leaves.

**Bald.....tree**, This is an illustration of the familiar figure of speech called *simile*. This is a beautiful simile or comparison. It brings before the mind the beautiful picture of a desolate tree that has dropped its leaves owing to the biting cold of winter, especially in the northern countries of Europe. "*The winter tree*" does not mean any particular tree, but trees in winter generally.

**Deep set**, Set deep under the brows (*i.e.*, the brows being prominent and rising above the eyes, a sign of intellectual penetration).

**Gleamed, etc.,** His eyes sparkled with a strange intellectual light, from the fact that he was possessed of secret sciences, which were not known to any body else.

**Mysteries, Secret knowledge, arts or sciences.**

**L. 31. None knew but he, None knew but he *knew*.**  
(The second "*knew*" is understood as the predicate of "he" and relative pronoun *which* is understood as the object of the first "*knew*".)

**Few (words), Very few; hardly any.**

**Few words.....paid,** He talked little, and the company present lent him little attention.

**L. 33. Young, yet old in guile, Young in years, yet old in wisdom.** (The figure of *oxymoron* is used here which consists in using contradictory words together).

**Guile,** The word usually means *cunning* or *treachery*, but is here used in a good sense = cleverness; wisdom.

**Failed not to note, Noticed.**

**Flickering, Glittering; gleaming unsteadily for a short time.**

**L. 36, He turned him, (Literally = he turned *himself*), He turned.** (*Him* is a reflexive object to "*turned*", not used in modern English.

**L. 37. So thought to know,** So the king thought that he would know or learn.

**The meat being done, The dinner being over** (nominative absolute construction).

**L. 40. Bade them, etc.,** The king commanded his people to introduce the learned man.

**We deem, etc.,** We think your coming here a fortunate circumstance.

**What is thine art?, What is your special subject?**  
(The possessive adjectives *mine, thine, etc.*, are used *attributively* instead of *my, thy, etc.*, when the noun they qualify begins with a vowel, but as a rule only in poetry.

**In rhyme, In verse, i.e., by writing poetry.**

**In rhyme.....time?** Do you write romantic poems about the past; are you a writer of romances in verse?

**Or.....wars,** Do you write chronicle histories.

**Chronicle** (Here used as a verb), Relate the events of the past (from Greek *Chronos* = time).

**Or dost.....stars,** Are you an astronomer?

**Or.....stone?** Are you an alchemist?

**Transmuting, Transforming.**

**Transmuting stone,** The Philosopher's stone, which was supposed to possess the property of turning every base metal it touched into gold. Such a stone, of course, does not exist. But it existed in the imagination of the ancient *alchemists* (the fore-runners of the modern *chemists*). The words *chemistry* and *alchemy* are derived from the Arabic *Kimia* which is also used in the Indian vernaculars).

**Or canst.....whole?** Are you a surgeon? (Literally, can you cause a fractured bone to be united?)

**And dying men arise,** Can you make dying men arise.

**And dying.....long,** Are you a doctor who can, etc.?

**As thou the wise,** Give them as long a life as you have yourself.

**Or what gift, etc.,** If not what have you come to offer me here, who delight only to honour men of science and learning?

**To me and mine, To me and my people.**

**L. 57. Along.....way,** Over the difficult paths of learning.

**That.....grave,** Which caused learned men to die early.

**For all the years,** In return for all the years.

**For all.....learn,** In return for all the time I have spent in acquiring all the knowledge which it is possible for man to acquire.

**L. 59. Man, Men; mankind.**

**A few.....earn,** (In return for all the time spent in acquiring learning), I obtain as a reward a few months of further life to be spent in learned leisure and satisfaction.



(The meaning is that the reward for all his labours in the past is that the brief remainder of his life will be spent in learned leisure).

**Nor feel.....**God, I do not feel, with all my learning, that I have become more like God (*i. e.* have come nearer to God, or resemble Him more, who is the source of all wisdom.

**Liker, (Obsolete)** More like.

**Than.....trod,** Than when I led a rude shepherd's life.

**Thymy, Abounding** with thyme, an aromatic herb.

**Down, (Anglo-Saxon *dun*=hill)** A tract of hilly land, used for pasturing sheep.

**Thymy.....down,** The hilly slopes covered with sweet smelling thyme, upon which the winds blow in all their fury.

**Somewhat, Something.**

**To tell.....gazed,** To tell you something which I have learnt from my knowledge of astrology.

**Yearned, Longed** earnestly ; desired passionately.

**Yearned.....off,** While gazing at the stars, I had a passionate desire to be freed from my earthly body which bound me to the earth, and to be free to wing my way amongst the stars.

**Weary body,** The body of which I was weary. (Here we have an illustration of the *figure of speech* called *Transferred Epithet* or *Hypallage* ; it is clear that the *body* was not weary, but the soul imprisoned within it was *weary of the body*. But the epithet (*i.e.*, adjective or qualifying term) *weary* is transferred from the *soul* (*i.e.*, *I*) to the *body*.

**Clains of mock, etc.,** All the jeering and ridicule, that binds and keeps us down.

**Chains of,** Chains consisting of. (The word *of* defines *Chains*, this use of the "*possessive*" being called *genitive of definition*). The word *Chain* is an example of "*metaphor*". There are, of course, no real *chains*. But infamy and misfortunes are *like chains* that bind us down to the earth.

**Creeping death,** Death that comes on very gradually ; slow advancing death. (Here *death* is regarded as a *chain* that

binds us to the earth. It would be more natural to regard *death* as the emancipator of the soul from the bonds of the flesh).

As I read.....decrees, While I read the decrees of fate as declared by the stars and planets.

With joy and dread, Causing joy where there was a prophecy of good events, and fear where there was a prophecy of evil events.

Somewhat, Something (*obsolete*).

Writ, (Obsolete) Written.

Of thee, About you.

Somewhat.....thee, Something concerning your future.

And who.....gone, And as regards the question who is to succeed you on the throne; as regards your successor on the throne.

"Nay", etc., We have to imagine that the wise man had stopped speaking, and the king asks him to go on quickly with his story.

Sire, Sir (the word *sire* is used in addressing kings and emperors.

Ancient line, Ancient genealogy.

A thing divine, As a thing under the special grace of God.

So long, etc., This sentence gives the reason for considering it "a thing divine."

In my glittering text, In the glittering book of the sky, inscribed with stars and planets. (He read the stars like a written page or book).

Shall sit, etc., Shall succeed.

Shall (sit), The use of "*shall*" instead of *will*, though the *subject* of the verb is in the *third person* is to be noted, the use of "*shall*" here signifies that the future event depends on the *will* or *command* of *fate* as expressed by the stars.

Shall be.....I, etc., Shall be a common and obscure person like me.

Whose.....breath, (Me) whose grand-father is now forgotten by all, and the birth-place of whose father is not even known.

**First drew breath, Was born.**

**L. 85. This may be, Such a thing may happen.**

**Ere I credit thee, Before I believe you.**

**Token, Sign ; proof.**

**Certes, (Obsolete) Certainly.**

**Or tell.....alive, Or tell me something, which I think I only have knowledge of, that is, of which no one has any knowledge except myself.**

**All folk alive, The world of living men.**

**Make thee head of all, etc., Make you my chief astronomer ( Or astrologer ). [ In England the leading astronomer, under the patronage of the king bears the title of *Astronomer Royal*.**

**L. 93. These, These persons.**

**To thee alone, To you when you are alone.**

**Long hidden matters, Matters kept secret for a long time.**

**L. 96, 97. Well, All right.**

**Strange to me etc., This Kingdom of yours is not a familiar place to me ; this Kingdom is not a congenial place for me to reside in. (He is more accustomed to live in the wilderness).**

**Thon well.....misery, You will be excused if you hate me for my harsh body stricken down with age and sorrow.**

**Let.....be, Let it be so.**

**My masters, Gentlemen.**

**For.....lack, I want to take fresh air.**

**Pleasance, (Obsolete) Garden. (Literally, *something that is pleasing*).**

**To Hearken, To listen to.**

**Elder, Elderly man.**

**Gain new lore, Acquire new learning or wisdom.**

**Close, An enclosed field or garden in the midst of open fields or meadows.**

**Amidst of these, Among these trees.**

**Turned about, Turned round to accost the stranger.**

L. 112. Of the.....end, Let me hear the last of your foolish words.

Take.....therefore, Take this gold chain as a reward for it.

L. 114. Rightly thou namest etc., You have rightly called my imperfect learning by the name of folly.

What the fates.....thou, Take calmly that which is sent to you by fate.

Nor.....set, Don't struggle against fate; do not fight against the decree of fate. (A man struggling against fate is compared to a man or animal struggling in a net in which his (or its) feet are entangled. Man cannot free himself from the meshes of fate just as an animal, when once entangled in the hunter's net, finds it difficult to extricate itself.

L. 119. Hearken, Listen; attend. (From line 119 to 130 the prophet describes a past incident only known to the King as a token or proof required by him in verse 87).

Is well-nigh done, Is almost completed.

At the.....sun, When the heat of the sun was most scorching.

Jewelled, Adorned with jewels.

Of thee, From you.

Drank.....wine, Drank mortal poison mingled with his wine, (*i. e.* not knowing he swallowed the poisoned wine).

Drank swift death, The language is figurative. He did not *literally* drink death, but he drank something which was the cause of death. Death was the *effect*. The *effect* changed into the *cause*. When such a *change* takes place in the use of words, the figure of speech is called *Metonymy*. (The word *Metonymy* literally means a *change of name*).

Guise of wine, Poison in the *disguise* of wine (*i. e.* the poison was skilfully blended with the wine).

l. 120-130. Since.....blows, The King had poisoned a trusty servant who only knew many of his secrets, especially about the assassination of a great noble, the Earl Marshal Hugh.

**Most.....thine,** Most trusted of all your followers.

**Too.....grew,** Came to know too many of your secrets.

**He of all men,** He knew more than any one else.

**How the Earl etc,** The cause of the death of Earl Marshal Hugh.

**Earl Marshal,** An officer of state in England, who *marshals* (i. e. arranges) and orders all state ceremonies, and has general supervision over matters relating to honour, arms, and pedigrees of nobles, and is the head of the herald's office or college of arms. (We have to understand that there was a corresponding officer at the court of the King in the story.)

**Drawn,** Enticed ; lured.

**Bushment,** (obsolete), This form is shortened from "*ambushment*". Both these forms are obsolete. The meaning is the same as *ambush* (or *ambuscade*), which is a further abbreviation used in modern English.

**Into.....foes,** To a place where his enemies were waiting in ambush.

**To die.....blows,** To be killed by a shower of blows dealt by his enemies.

**To die etc ,** Infinitive of *purpose* or gerundial infinitive.

**131. Thou.....diest,** You know that his death was brought about by me.

**How if now ?, What will happen if etc.** (He means to say :—" You know that I have killed him, but what will happen to you now, if I raise a *false cry* that you are doing me violence? Will not my people come here and seize you, and put you to death, and thus silence for ever your mouth and stifle that knowledge about my dark deeds which you alone possess ? ")

**Help,** Come to my help !

**Slayeth me,** Is killing me.

**Swiftly should etc.,** In one moment would you feel the points of twenty swords (i. e. the swords of twenty of my loyal servants) penetrating into your sides and clashing against your ribs.)

**Swiftly** should etc., Notice the *inverted* order of words in this sentence, the auxiliary "*should*" coming before the subject "*sword-blades*" and the adverb "*swiftly*" coming at the head of the whole sentence. The order of words is *inverted* for the sake of *emphasis*. The emphasis is placed on the word "*swiftly*."

l. 137. **Not**.....die, I have no fear at all of such a death ; I know that I am not to have such a death and have no fear about it.

**Death**.....yet, Death is not going to make me one of his victims for many years to come.

**Pass me by**, Will not take notice of me.

**Perchance**, Perhaps.

**Because**.....dance, Perhaps because I have not the least fear of his violent ways.

**Aught**, Any thing.

I fear not aught, I don't fear at all.

**His clattering dance**, (Metaphor) His noisy revels or sport.

**And have**.....days, And have plenty of time to spend in a dull and listless way.

**Win**.....hearkening, You will be praised by wise people if you listen to the prophecy and act properly.

**With heed**, Attentively.

**This most certain thing**, The future event which is sure to occur (the event is the succession of an obscure person to the King's throne.)

**This tale**: Probably the story of the poisoning of Antony and the assassination of Earl Marshal Hugh.

**Heathy hills**, Hills covered with heather.

**Erne**, Eagle ("*Erne*" is *obsolete* except in poetry).

**Stoops down**, Pounces down upon.

**New-yeaned**, New-born.

**A few folk**, A small population.

**Almost as a God** etc., In that wild and mountainous land, I have absolute authority over the few wild inhabitants, almost as if I were a god.

Nought, Nothing ; nothing at all.

Who hear.....fame, To whom your name is but a word which sometimes falls upon their ears, but they have no knowledge at all about your character or greatness.

Scarcely.....beast, They can scarcely say whether the name you bear is the name of a man or brute.

L. 154. Back.....turned, He returned to the banqueting-hall.

Adown, (*Obsolete*, used in poetry) Down.

Gibe, (Pronounce *jibe*) Taunt ; sneer.

With face turned etc., Travelling straight towards.

L. 158. Windy down, Compare "*wind-swept down*" in verse 63.

In pensive thought, Wrapt in gloomy thoughts ; weighed down with melancholy thoughts.

Delighting.....lot, Neither his wealth nor his royal rank (*or station*) gave him any pleasure now.

How his days etc., Of his earlier life.

Of the.....man, Thinking what a lovely thing is man. (He felt himself very lovely in the midst of all his wealth).

L. 165. Amidst.....that, In the midst of various distractions of state affairs.

Forgat, (*Obsolete*) Forgot.

Took to him, Married.

A noble.....daughters, He married a noble lady, who was a princess, of royal birth.

Of the Kings' daughters, He selected a wife out of the daughters of the different Kings.

Being wed, Being wedded, being married.

Nigh a year, Nearly a year.

Growing great with child, Having conceived a child ; being in the stage of pregnancy.

L. 169. They being wed etc. : At a time when nearly a year passed over their marriage and the queen was pregnant, it happened etc.

With many folk, With a large band of followers.

L. 173. **Must, (*ride*)**, He was led by fate to ride into a wild forest.

L. 174. **At ending, etc.**, On a day at the end of summer. (About the month of August).

L. 172. **It happed, (*Obsolete*)**, It happened.

**Hart, Stag** ; male deer.

**Brought to bay, Hunted.** (*Properly*, hunted till the pursued animals turned round on the hunters for a final stand. When the deer or other animal is flying for its life, with the grey-hounds close in its pursuit, there finally comes a stage when the animal can fly no more. It then turns round and attacks the dogs and hunters to try its last chance of resistance. At this stage the deer is said to *be brought to bay* to to *stand at bay*. The word "bay" refers to the *baying*, or loud cries of the dogs gathering round it. The verb "*bark*" is not used of the cries of hunting dogs. The verb "*bay*" is the appropriate verb to express their cries.)

**Right noble** (*Right* is an adverb), Quite noble ; very fine.

**Prize, Booty** ; the spoils of the chase. (*Literally* "*prize*" means anything that is *caught*. It comes from the Latin *Prehendo*=*I catch or seize*, through the French).

**Grew overcast**, Were being shaded with darkness.

**Roused**, Stirred up from *cover* or hiding-place.

**'Gan, Began**.

**For dusk or eve**, Even though it was evening and getting dark.

**Horns, Bugles**.

**Sparred**, Put spurs to his horse ; quickened the pace of his horse.

**Taking no thought of, Unmindful of** ; not caring for ; regardless ; paying no heed. (It is an *obsolete* phrase).

**Taking no.....least**, Not caring to see whether a large number or a small number of his companions were with him.

**But only of, etc.**, But only thinking of.

**Royal beast**, That magnificent creature.



Over rough and smooth, Over rocky tracts of land or smooth plains [*cf.*, Wordsworth (Lucy Gray), "Over rough and smooth she treads along, Nor ever looks behind."]

Abode, (Past tense of "*abide*") Waited.

Till dark.....day (*Nominative absolute*), As dark night came on and dispelled the day-light.

Swallowed up, Drowned ; absorbed.

With blindness, On account of blindness *i. e.* inability to see anything in the dark.

Swift course, Swift pursuit or run after the deer.

Must stay, Must stop

Swift.....stay, He had to stop all further pursuit.

Nor.....one, He found no comrade with him.

So for, To such an extent.

So.....hunting-folk, To such an extent had his horse out-galloped the most dashing of his companions in the hunting party.

1. 195. Broke etc., Were shining through the branches.

1. 195. 'Twixt, Betwixt (almost obsolete), Between.

Backward.....turned, He turned back ; began to return.

Peered, Pried ; began to see through the darkness.

Nought, Nothing.

His folk, His followers in the hunting party.

Therewith, ( Literally, "*with that*" ) Upon this.

Thought, *He* thought.

His bed.....brown, He must make his bed for the night of the brown leaves of the brake (*i. e.* bracken leaves.)

Brake, Bracken ; fern ; briers.

1. 200. Lighted down, Alighted from his horse ; dismounted.

Felt about, Went about by feeling his way.

1. 201-202. Felt about.....find, Felt about *to see if* he he might find ( the italicised words "*to see*" are to be understood before "*if*").

A softer place, A softer place where he might make his bed.

**Groped,** Walked in the dark by feeling his way with his hands, as a blind man does.

l. 205. ' **Twixt**, See note on l. 195.

**If yet,** *To see if yet* ( *Vide* note on l. 202.)

**Amidst their misery,** The word *their* does not seem to be correctly used, supposing it refers to the word *peasant* in l. 207, unless we take it vaguely to stand for the *peasant* and *his family*. In this case the meaning would be " the wretched condition of the poor peasant's family ".

l. 212. **Till.....looked for,** Till gradually the light did indeed prove to be what he had taken it for, *viz.* a wood-fire in a peasant's hut.

**Cleared spade, etc..** A clearing or open space ; a glade.

**Streamed,** Flowed, as it were, in a stream.

L. 216. **Erst,** Ere while ; shortly before ; formerly.

**Fain,** Glad.

**Of.....fain,** He was glad to have discovered this place of shelter.

**Made shift to,** Managed to ; contrived to ( "*Make shifts*" is a common idiomatic expression).

**To gain,** To reach.

**A shadow.....flit,** He saw a shadow moving over the grass.

**A big man,** The shadow cast by this man.

**Bar of wood, etc.,** With a wooden bar like a cudgel in his land.

**As though.....blow,** It seemed he was preparing himself to deliver a blow.

**He got him ready,** *Him* means *himself* and is a reflexive object to "*got*".

**Good hap,** Good luck (*Hap* in an *obsolete* word).

**May.....send,** May God send you good luck.

**According.....might,** Such food as you can afford to give.

L. 229. **Carle,** Peasant ; churl (*Carle* is from the same word as *churl*, derived from the Anglo-Saxon).

**My wife.....labour,** My wife is in the throes of child-birth, *i.e.*, in the painful condition of a women about to give birth to a child. The word *labour*, though figurative in origin, is commonly used to denote these pains. The word is derived from Latin, in which language, among its other senses, it also expresses this meaning. The word *travail* has the same meaning.

**Nigh her death,** Is on the point of death.

**Stall, Stable ; shed.**

**Bide, Abide ; stay ; are kept at.**

**Neither for nothing, etc.,** I shall repay you for this.

**L. 240. Let these thoughts be,** Let these thoughts be at rest ; leave aside these thoughts.

**I think.....put,** I fear that before next morning I shall be in too lonely and disconsolate a frame of mind to be cheered up by gold. (I fear my wife will die before sunrise, and when I am in grief, what will be the use of gold to me ? It cannot console me in my sorrow).

**Forlorn, Quite lost ; forsaken ; wretched.**

**Too weary for gold, etc.,** So weary that gold could not &c.

**Much heart.....put,** To hearten me ; to cheer me up ; to give me comfort. (*Heart* is a *metaphor*, and denotes spirit, solace, comfort, or vigour).

**With that (he turned),** Having said this.

**Rye-bread, Bread made of rye ; a coarse kind of bread.** (Rye is a coarse kind of grain, like barley).

**Litter, A heap of straw for animals to lie upon ; straw or other coarse materials for a bed ; a straw bed.**

**Strewed.....brake,** (A shed) in which was spread a straw-bed made of bracken or ferns.

**Brake, Bracken** (see line 199).

**L. 248. Withal,** (*Literally, with all* = with the rest, now obsolete, but used in poetry. Sometimes *withal* means *with*), Likewise . moreover.

**He muttered.....a prayer,** He likewise offered a prayer to the Virgin Mary for the benefit of his guest, praying that he might have good sleep.

**Our Lady,** The Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ, to whom prayers are addressed in the Catholic Church, as also to the other saints. In England, prayers to the Virgin were common till the Restoration, and likewise in all Christian Europe. In those days, the prayers were usually in Latin. The name *Our Lady*, was the designation given to the mother of Christ in all Christian countries, before the Reformation. It is an English form of the corresponding name *Madonna* which was and is still used in Catholic countries like France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Southern America.

**Rude prayer,** A prayer in his coarse manner, (perhaps) in his coarse language.

**Turned about,** Turned round out of the stall.

**Nowise fine,** In no way fine; by no means fine. (In the word *nowise*, the latter half of the word, viz., *wise* is another form of *way* and has the same meaning. So that *nowise* = no way i. e. in no way).

**Munched,** Ohewed; eaten.

**Green wine,** New wine; wine that has not become mellow with time. (Old wines are the best).

**Beside,** Beside his horse.

**Brake,** The bracken bed.

**L. 257. Astonied,** (*Obsolete*) Astonished; confounded (*Literally*) thunder-struck. It is the old form of *astonished*).

**Unnamed fear,** Vague fear.

**Astonied etc.:** Here we have the introduction of a supernatural element in the story, which is a romance. The *romances* of the *Middle Ages* were full of such supernatural incidents, the effect of which on the reader's mind is to produce a feeling of awe and mystery, and ultimately to rouse in him a full sense of the dependence of man upon Providence, the author of the world of nature and of the supernatural

world. Such incidents likewise bring home to man the necessity of obeying the moral Law.

Words were ringing, He heard a ringing voice.

Like the last.....scream, As if they were the echo of a shrieking voice. In an echo only the last words or syllables are heard distinctly. The distinct words he heard were "Take ! take !"

But of the.....him, The dream vanished and no other remembrance of it was left in his mind.

Image, Impression ; remembrance.

Trembling sort etc., Trembling very much in all his body. Passed forth, Walked out.

Sword, The grass ; the green turf.

Crept, Went crouching about.

Groaning etc., The moaning of the peasant's wife, who was in the throes of child-labour.

Forest.....well known, The usual familiar sounds heard in forests at night.

But rife.....Soul, Sounds which, though well-known, have the effect sometimes of causing terror to a lonely person.

Rife with terror, Full of terror.

L. 270. To roll.....cloak, To wrap himself in his hunting cloak.

L. 273. To tremble, *Gerundial Infinitive* denoting the effect ( not purpose ) of " once more woke " in line 272.

To tremble.....fear, With the result that a fresh fit of trembling came on him on account of that mysterious fear.

L. 274. To hear, See *grammatical note* on l. 273.

And other.....hear, To hear the dying echoes of other words.

Give up, Leave ; relinquish.

Nor anything.....about him, He could not see the cause of these strange sounds ringing in his ears.

Bewildered, Confused.

Gazing.....night, Peering through the darkness of the night.

**Until.....plain,** Until his eyes got tired and drowsy and he could see no more the stems of the trees shining clearly with star light against the back-ground of the dark forest.

**Star-lit,** Lit up *i. e.* illumined by the stars ; shining under star-light.

**Slim, Slender.**

**Against,** Against the back-ground of ; in contrast with.

**Gray and plain,** Shining clear with a grayish-colour.

**Woke not soon,** Continued long to sleep.

**Nor.....shed,** He dreamt that he had awaked in that very shed (*i. e.* he thought that what he saw in the dream was taking place in that very shed).

**The ancient Sage,** The wise man who had made the prophecy.

**Shrivelled.....age,** Wrinkled more than ever by reason of his old age, which it was difficult to count in years.

**Untold (age),** Uncounted (This is one of the earlier meanings of the word. The meaning is that he looked so old that it was difficult to measure his age in years).

**"Take or give up,"** The sage is repeating the words the King had heard in his previous dreams.

L. 291. **Take.....it,** You may either take up or give up, what difference does it make? The words are intended to perplex the King like a riddle. But in the light of the whole story narrated by Morris, and in the light of the story in the *Gesta Romanorum* upon which Morris has based his poem, it is clear that the meaning is that *the King might either take up or give up* the "man born to be King." *viz.*, the *baby* just then born to the peasant's wife next to the place where the King was sleeping. He might *take* him, or *give* him *up* : but in either case the result was to be the same *viz.*, he was to succeed the King upon his throne, when the King was dead and buried. The prophecy was to be fulfilled. It will be seen from the narrative to come that the King did *take* him up and tried to put him to a cruel death more than once.

But in the end he had to *give up* to him his only daughter and kingdom.

**This child, The peasant's child.**

**Seat, Throne.**

L. 293. **Gone, Dead** (In using the word *gone* in the sense of *dead*, the poet has made use of a well-known *figure of speech*, called "*Euphemism*." This figure consists in using words which are more pleasing in their meaning for expressing a thought or idea which is harsh or disagreeable in itself, *e. g.*, the idea of death is rather harsh, and by *Euphemism* the meaning of it is expressed by the more agreeable word "*gone*."

L. 294. **Dwelling.....stone, Buried in the grave.** The expression *dwelling.....stone* is an illustration of two different figures of speech:—(1) It is an *Euphemism*, of the same kind as is illustrated by the use of "*gone*" in l. 293. *Walls of stone* is a more pleasing expression than a *grave*; (2ndly). It is an illustration of a figure of speech, called *Periphrasis*, or *round-about description or statement*. For "*dwelling etc.*" is a round-about way of saying "*buried in the grave or tomb*," *Periphrasis* or round-about statement is generally considered a fault in composition and is to be avoided; but sometimes, as in the present case, it is very effective.

**Walls of stone, Tomb; grave.**

**Panting, Breathing hard.**

**Afeared, (*Obsolete*) Afraid; filled with fear.**

**Where yet.....light, Where it was still dark in the forest.**

**To cast off sleep, Shake off his sleep.**

**Visions, Dreams.**

**Such.....keep, To stop these dreams.**

**None the less, Nevertheless.**

**Wildering, (*Obsolete*) Bewildering; perplexing.**

**'Twist.....weariness, Between bewildering thoughts and weariness** *i. e.* partly on account of his weariness, and partly on account of the bewildering thoughts that came into his head.

**Nor.....again,** Without any more dreaming or waking.

**Blink,** To see obscurely or with eyes half closed.

**Pondering on,** Reflecting on ; musing on.

**Mysteries, Dreams ; visions.**

**Hovel, Hut.**

**L. 311. Moody, Sullen ; gloomy.**

**Stark, Stiff.**

**Near morn,** About morning time.

**'Twixt.....lay,** Between the peasant and his dead wife there was a new-born baby.

**Man-child, Male child.**

**Great,** Large of limb, considering that it was a child.

**In the door,** In the door-way.

**L. 317. Who.....that,** Who paid no attention to anything.

**The new-made wound etc.,** The bereavement he had just then suffered by the death of his wife: (*Wound* is a metaphor).

**So sore.....heart,** He felt his wife's death so keenly ; so intense was his grief at the death of his wife.

**L. 320. For his part,** So far as the King was concerned.

**His threatened foe,** The new-born baby to whom the prophecy and the visions seemed unmistakably to point.

**Threatened,** Portended by the visions.

**L. 322. Ever,** Continually ; steadily.

**Hard.....grow,** He became more and more callous, or hard-hearted.

**With.....wilfulness,** His heart was filled with feelings of bitter hatred against the child and blind obstinacy.

**The harder,** By so much the more hard (*the* is an adverb qualifying "*harder*.")

**As of.....last,** The *prose order* is "As he thought of noight, but (of) that broken line of which etc." The meaning is "Since he thought of no other subject except the long dynasty of Kings (*viz.* his own royal family) which was now to be cut off and of which dynasty he was to be the last King."



**That unbroken line,** That long continued succession of Kings descended from one family.

**Of.....last,** Of which he was to be the last King *i. e.* which line was to be cut off after him.

**Withal,** (See note on l. 248) Likewise.

**L. 328. His.....fall,** His sorrowful eyes travelled scornfully over.

**Nest of poverty,** That hovel in which every object spoke of the poverty of the occupants.

**Where.....see,** Where he could see nothing that was bright or joyous, everything that was gloomy and joyless. (It seemed to him a place full of misery).

Lines 331 to 343 : These lines describe the gloomy and joyless condition of the hovel, at that moment.

**The door.....day,** There was no other opening for letting in the sunlight except the door.

**The day, Day-light.**

**Showing,** qualifies "the day." The day-light showed the earthen floor etc. The *objects* of the *participle* "showing" are *floor, board, stumps, pipkin, bowl, platter, bowl of wood, bow, club, and arrows.*

**Earthen floor,** Floor made of earth only *i. e.* not paved with stone or mortar.

**Board,** Table ; dining-table.

**Board on trestles,** The top-piece of the table raised upon movable supports.

**Trestles,** Movable supports fastened to a top-piece ; the frame of a table.

**A board.....poor,** The table was a piece of wood raised upon flimsy legs or supports of a wretched kind.

**Three.....chairs,** The chairs or stools consisted of three-hewn blocks of wood from the forest trees.

**Pipkin,** A small earthen pot (*Pipkin* is a diminutive of *pipe.*)

**Half-glazed**, Partially glazed ; with a partial glazing or glassy polish.

**Nothing fair**, Not beautiful to look at. (*Nothing* is an adverb qualifying "*fair*." )

**Bowl**, A round drinking-cup.

**Porridge**, A kind of pudding usually made by stirring oat-meal amongst boiling water ; a kind of broth.

L. 337. By, Near.

**Untouched.....life**, Which the woman had not touched having already died.

**Platter**, A kind of large *plate* or dish.

L. 341. **Wych-elm**, A name variously applied to trees supposed to possess magical properties. The peasant's bow was made out of the wood or bough of such a tree.

**Holly club**, A cudgel or heavy stick made out of the wood of the holly tree.

**Holly**, An evergreen shrub having prickly leaves and scarlet or yellow berries.

**Splice**, Unite two ropes, rods, or planks by lapping the ends together, and binding, or in any way making fast.

(**Arrows**) **Spliced with thread**, (*Arrows*) broken in the middle but having the broken ends joined together with threads.

**Ill pointed, heavy, spliced etc.**, Notice the omission of the conjunction *and*, which is an illustration of a figure of speech, called *Asyndeton*.

L. 344. **Soothly, Truly**.

**Soothly.....come, Truly**, in the days to come, he always had a vivid recollection of that desolate and sorrow-stricken home, with its dismal walls.

In days to come,  
or

} In the years that fol-  
lowed.

L. 347. **In the coming years**

L. 348. **Called to mind, Recollected**.

**Pattering tears**, Tears dropping like rain (the tears of the peasant are meant).

**Rent, Torn ; tattered.**

**Sack-cloth,** Coarse cloth (formerly used especially in mourning or penance) ; the coarse clothing of the peasant.

L. 349, 350. **That on.....fast,** Prose order :—That fell full fast on the rent old sack cloth cast about the (peasant's) body, *i. e.* tears which fell fast upon the tattered sack-cloth dress of the peasant.

L. 351. **'Twixt.....wild,** (Tears that fell) in the midst of sobs and cries partly expressing prayers for the dead and partly calling curses upon the unhappy child, whose coming into the world had hastened the death of his unhappy wife.

**Half-meant prayers,** Cries meant partly as prayers, (and partly as curses).

L. 352. **Weak wailing of the child,** (This is an *object* to the verb “called to mind” in l. 348). The faint cries of the new-born infant.

L. 353. **His threatened.....enemy,** (*Apposition* to child (in l. 352). The enemy, whom he feared so much, and about whom the prophecy had been made.

**The mighty.....be,** *Apposition* to “child.” The man born to be King.

L. 388. **Unsoftened,** Without feeling any pity at the sad sight.

**With.....care,** Being blinded by his hatred (*or* filled with a bitter hatred) which arose out of his contempt for the lowly child and his fears about the future of his throne.

**Begot of,** That arose from.

**Horn, Bugle.**

**His.....know,** Recognized from the sound of the bugle that his hunting party were approaching.

**A long shrill point,** A long shrill note on the bugle, (in reply to his companions).

**Aback,** (Obsolete), Back.

**Close-set etc.,** Dense growth of thickets or brushwood.

**Broke, Burst in.**

**The cleared space,** The clearing or open space in front of the hut (See, l. 214).

**Doleful, Sorrowful.** (Old English, *dole* = sorrow, from Latin *dolor*, grief).

**Thwart, Athwart, across** (Obsolete in this sense, except in poetry). (The verb *to thwart*, meaning to *cross*, contradict or frustrate is the same word, and is still in use).

**Drew.....strong,** He rubbed his eyes with his fingers.

**Stupidly, Unintelligently ;** in a dull, insensible manner.

**Sirs, Gentlemen.**

**Sirs, Well be ye !** Good morning to you, gentlemen.

**Harbour, Shelter.**

**Victual, Food,** (Generally used in the plural number *victuals* and pronounced *vittels*, from Latin *victus*, food).

**As he might, As he could** (Here *might* is used in its older sense. Literally "*may*" means "*to be able*," and *might* is power).

**Therefore.....reward,** The reward to be given to him must be something more than gold.

**Helpmate, Wife ;** his partner and helper in life.

**Youngling, Young child.** [In the word *youngling* the suffix *ling* is a *Diminutive* suffix, that is a suffix having the power to convert the word to which it is added on into a *diminutive*, denoting smallness or contempt, e. g. *lordling*, *duckling*, *gosling* (from *goose*), *hireling* etc.]

**Rear, Bring up ;** educate.

**Alow, (Obsolete) Low.**

**Shall.....straw,** Shall no more lead a miserable peasant life sleeping in a bed of straw.

**Or.....dine,** Or dine out of a coarse platter (or plate) made of beech-wood. (In l. 333 we have seen that in the peasant's hut there was "a platter and a bowl of wood)."

**Silver plate etc.,** On the other hand he would have fine linen clothes and silver dishes to dine out of.

**With.....Lord,** He shall be a knight or soldier and do service to some King or noble instead of being a peasant or woodman like his father.

**How sayst thou, What would you say to that ?**  
**Shamfaced, Confused with shame.**

**Erst, Till lately ; formerly.**

**L. 389. She etc., His wife.**

**Kept.....me, Who was my house-keeper.**

**L. 390. E'en as ; Even as ; just as ; exactly as.**

**Help me get, Help me *to get*.**

**And now indeed, Now indeed since he has lost his mother.**

**Forth.....go, He must be sent out of the house.**

**If.....grow, If he is, at all, to grow to be a man.**

**To whom.....alike, To me it is the same, it makes no difference at all, where I go; to me all places are alike.**

**East, west etc., The four quarters of the earth.**

**Forgive.....thee, Excuse me, if I have not thanked you enough for your kindness.**

**Who.....heaven, For I have scarcely the sense to thank God Himself.**

**For.....given, For leaving to me even those favours (or bounties) which I still possess out of those which He had originally bestowed upon me.**

**Small.....gave, The King paid little attention to his words.**

**Trembling.....enemy, With nervous excitement and haste to secure the body of his future enemy, as he took the new-born baby to be.**

**This, *i. e.* This gold as a reward.**

**Wherewith, By means of which.**

**To gain.....bliss, To obtain some means of comfort.**

**In.....gone, In compensation for all he has suffered in the past.**

**Nor.....alone, There is no reason why he should live here a long time in this loneliness (*i. e.* with the help of the money he might secure new friends or marry again.)**

**At.....gold, At the jingling sound of gold coins.**

**Lit up, (Intransitive here, generally transitive). Was lit up ; was illumined or brightened with joy.**

**Though.....there,** Though the withered dead body of his wife was still lying before him.

**Stooping, Bending down.**

**Foursquare,** Rectangular ; square.

**Lined etc.,** Covered on the inside with hay.

**L. 415. Raised,** The object of *raised* is *box* in l. 412.

**His hire, His reward.**

**Sooth, Truly ; indeed ;** (*Sooth* or *in sooth* are obsolete expressions).

**Nor.....while,** He did not venture to say anything at the time.

**L. 418. Smile,** Cognate object.

**Grim smile,** a fierce or sullen smile.

**His pieces,** The gold coins bestowed on him.

**All men, All the party of the King.**

**L. 422. Drearihood,** (*Obsolete* poetical word) Wretchedness (*Abstract* from *adj* "dreary").

**L. 424. He,** The peasant.

**Adown a glade, Down a glade.**

**Glade,** An open space in a wood.

**Hermitage,** The abode of a hermit ; a hermit's cell.

**He made, He went to.**

**Unto his need, For his need** (*viz.* the burial of his wife).

**Say her bede, Say prayers** for her salvation.

**Bede, Bede** properly means *beads, rosary*. Prayers were counted by means of the beads of a rosary i. e. a string of beads, as is still done by *sadhus, fakirs etc.* in India. Hence the meaning is *prayers*.

**So.....aright,** When he had gone through the usual ceremonies of funeral.

**Heavy.....woe,** Filled with his great sense of sorrow.

**Woodland hut, Forest cottage.**

**To.....lands,** To try what good luck he might have in strange countries.

**Forgetting.....be fall,** Casting off from his thought the events that had taken place in that forest.

L. 434:—At this point the poet leaves the peasant to his fate and turns to the story of the King. We hear no more about the peasant or woodman.

**Moody, Sullenly.**

**Thinking.....thing,** Thinking only of the prophecy.

**Weighted.....fear,** Bowed down by a great sense of fear (as he thought of that portion of the prophecy which was yet to take place, *viz.*: the new-born babe to succeed him as King).

**Anear, (Obsolete) Near.**

**From close to lea,** From the enclosed fields to the open fields.

**Close.** An enclosed place ; a small enclosed field.

**Lea,** A meadow ; grass-land ; pasturage.

**Heathy ridge,** A ridge covered with *heather*.

L. 440. **The road etc.**: The direction of the road is described. It went from close fields to open fields. Then it passed from a high ridge of heaths over a low-land stream by a wooden bridge.

**There.....gleam etc.,** His eyes sparkled with a new thought that came into his mind. His hand went naturally to his sword, because it was a cruel thought.

**Squire add lord,** The squires and lords who accompanied him.

**Squire,** A gentleman attending upon a knight. In ancient times, a knight began his career as a *squire* serving some knight, until he was himself promoted to the rank of a knight. In later times, the word came to denote a gentleman or landlord, next in social rank, after a knight. There were many such country squires in the rural parts of England. The modern *Esquire* is the same word as *Squire*, and has practically come to denote the rank of every gentleman commoner. In the present democratic age, almost every man calls himself an *esquire*.

**Range etc.,** Ramble about at large.

**Fain,** Gladly.

Right slowly, Very slowly.

Noting etc, Taking note of the produce of the several fields.

Lightly.....beguiled, My squire, bearing the child, will amuse me on the way, so that I won't feel any fatigue.

Beguiled, Literally *deceived*. "*My way shall be beguiled*" means "the fatigue of the journey will be deceived" i. e. he will amuse me so that I won't feel any fatigue. (*Beguile* comes from the noun *guile*, Deceit).

By the stream, Near the river.

L. 459. Learn.....ern, Till he is old enough to learn some profession by which he may rise to greatness and wealth.

L. 462. With.....word, There was some sadness in the King and his eyes were fixed on the ground as he uttered the last word, "*lord*." (The King had a secret fear that the baby was destined to be not only a *lord* but a *King* after him).

Drew rein, Reined in his horse.

L. 465. Their green etc., He stopped to see his hunting companions vanishing from sight. As hunters or foresters the King's companions were dressed in green coats. The green colour was favourite with hunters and foresters, as being in harmony with the *green* woods.

L. 456-58. This. ....passed, This is a very fine description of the manner in which they gradually disappeared from sight. It is *true to nature*. At first evidently the hunting party were riding in *parallel lines*, no matter whether they rode breast to breast or some behind the others. But as they passed into the distance, the *parallel lines* of their march seemed to *converge* into one another, i. e. became *converging lines*. This is what actually takes place when a number of objects is seen receding from us in the distance. When objects are seen from a distance on a plane surface the lines of vision seem to converge. This is also our experience when we try to catch a view of things, or what is called a *vista*, from a distance. The bending, or converging, of lines of view are represented in art (drawing or painting) by what is called *perspective*.



The verses under reference give a *perspective* picture in words of the gradual disappearance of the King's party as viewed by the King himself. The description is *realistic i. e.* a vivid and faithful representation of what is actually seen in nature or human experience.

Until.....passed, In the midst of the dust and mist, in the distance, they seemed to form into an unsteady mass.

Haze. Vapour which renders the air thick.

Wavering mass, An ever-changing mass or column ; an unsteady mass. (*Everchanging* because the different riders were constantly changing their position).

Then.....quite, Then they became quite invisible, and no trace of them could be seen through the hedgerows.

Hedgerows, Rows or lines of hedges.

Just told of, Just indicated by ; barely disclosed by.

Just.....slim, Their presence was barely indicated by the white clouds of dust in the distance, which arose from their horses' hoofs and curled up from between the slender stems of the elm-trees. (Here the poet gives us another realistic word picture. The riders had so far vanished from sight that the dust-clouds rolling behind them were the only sign left of their presence somewhere in that neighbourhood. The elm has a slender trunk, and the dust clouds rolled between the slender trunks of the elm-trees.)

L. 466-471. This.....slim, These six lines are a fine example of word painting, describing more clearly than *painting* can the different *phases* of their disappearance.

L. 472. His.....child, The squire who was holding the baby.

L. 474. The thing wherein etc., It was a rough box of wood lined with hay. See verses 411 to 414.

On one side etc., On one of the sides of the box.

In red.....white, The red figure of a lion upon a white back-ground.

Dight, (Obsolete) Prepared, (literally, disposed, adorned).  
Of old, Formerly.

**As.....palisade,** As if the wooden board (of which the box was made) was originally used to form part of a rude palisade or fortification of some ancient lord, whose family badge or ensign was the figure of a lion in red painted on a white back-ground. (The student is to understand that the sight of the figure of a lion on the baby's box increases the nervous fear of the King, as it seems to strike him vaguely as an augury of the baby's future. The *lion* is naturally a symbol of power, greatness, *majesty*).

**Rough-wrought palisade,** Some rude fortification work.

**Palisade,** A fortification made by driving stakes into the ground.

**L. 482. Line, Family ; dynasty.**

**My.....served,** You and your ancestors have been hereditary servants of my royal house.

**Through.....ill,** In prosperity and adversity.

**Unto.....law,** You obey every expression of my wishes, as more binding than law ; you respect my wishes more than law.

**Nigh me, Near me.**

**Hearkening,** Paying attention to.

**Withal,** At the same time.

**Drawn nigh.....stream,** Have approached more closely to the river.

**Adown.....boat,** We must drown him into the river, with the box which is his cradle.

**Ark,** (Latin *arca*) Chest, box.

**With.....boat,** The box which is his cradle shall be his boat to swim in, (*i. e.* we shall toss him into the water, but let him swim, if it is the wish of Heaven etc.).

**If.....spill,** If he has been marked out by fate to be the extinguisher of my royal house.

**L. 497. Spill,** *Obsolete* in the sense of *deface* or *destroy* which is the meaning here.

**"Spill"**, The usual meaning of the word is *to waste*, or *cause to flow* or *shed* something loose or fluid, *e. g.* blood, water

etc. (We might imagine "Spill" "spill *the blood of*"; but these words are not expressed, though the meaning is evidently suggested, especially by the phrase "*shed his blood*" in line 499).

While.....blood etc., Let God save him, if such is the will of Heaven; in any case I shall be guiltless of shedding his blood.

Yea, Yes.

Thy.....good, What you say is true.

Who.....were, I who am willing to do even greater things (*i. e.* even greater crimes) on your behalf, if there should be any need.

'Scape, Escape.

Let him go, Let him go alive; let him live; let him escape.

Since.....grow, Because I believe you will not succeed in your object of thus getting rid of the child. (He believes the King cannot undo the decree of fate).

Nought, Nothing; void.

To nought etc., Your wishes will be rendered void or ineffective.

Let.....be, Let all come to pass which is destined to come to pass.

If I.....swift, If only I have the satisfaction to see the baby with its cradle carried down by the whirling water.

L. 510. If, Provided that

L. 510. But, Only (adverb).

Eddies, Whirling water; whirlpool.

Tangled, Entangled; caught up in.

Tangled.....drift, Caught up in the violent autumn currents.

Drift, A heap of matter *driven* together, such as snow, ice, sand, logs etc. by force of wind or water.

Autumn drift, Rubbish matter forced (into the river) by autumn currents.

Wrong side up, Upside down; topsy—turvy.

**With that word,** As he was speaking this.

**Their.....heard,** He saw they were already upon the wooden bridge.

L. 516. **Nigh.....abode,** He waited after reaching the other end of the bridge.

**Abode,** Waited ; halted (Past tense of *abide*).

**Turned,** He turned round.

**Bridge-rail,** The railing of the bridge.

L. 519. **Withal,** At the same time.

L. 520. **A muttered word,** Something muttered by the squire.

**Splashing fall,** Something falling with a splashing sound.

L. 519. **He heard etc.,** The objects of *heard* are "*word*," "*fall*" and "*cry*."

**Overset,** Upset. (The child was not upset).

**Soothly,** Truly.

**If.....foe,** The King had a doubt whether he really had succeeded in getting rid of his enemy, *viz.*, the child.

**Outright,** Completely.

**Had rid him,** Had rid *himself* (Reflexive *Object*) ; had got rid of.

**Nor knew.....need,** Did not know what more to do under the circumstances, so as to be quite sure that his new-born enemy was dead.

**Full.....showed,** Showed no concern at all for what had happened

**Stark,** Stiff ; rigid ; strong ; vigorous. (Here the meaning is *strong* or *stout*).

**Bridle-hand,** The hand in which the bridle is held while riding *i. e.* the left hand.

**Unto.....nigher,** Come nearer to him at his left hand.

**Talk.....things,** Converse about worthless matters.

**As.....Kings,** Such unimportant matters as great Kings may talk about with their menial servants.

L. 538. **Thereby,** By it ; near it.

**Chamberlain**, The servant in charge of the chamber or bed-room.

**L. 539. Eager eyes**, His eyes were eager on account of his impatience to communicate the news.

**L. 540. Lips.....lies**, He had a gravity which came from the habitual hypocrisy of a servitor at court.

**D. 542. Wild-wood**, Wilderness ; forest.

**Had borne etc.**, The queen had been delivered of a daughter during his absence.

**So.....threat**, *He was* so well etc., *i. e.*, he became so glad and happy at the news.

**Well at ease**, Easy ; happy ; free from care. (Opposed to *ill at ease*).

**Threat**, *At that i. e.* at it *i. e.* at this news.

**Forgot**, (Obsolete) Forgot.

**Nigh**, Nearly ; almost.

**His.....forgot**, He almost forgot the troublesome dream he had while sleeping in the peasant's hut.

**L. 546. Forgat** : The objects of this verb are, *dream*, *waking*, and *ride*.

**Fateful river-side**, The ominous river ; the river where the child had been drowned, who had such influence upon his destiny.

**Or thought etc.**, Nor did he think of any of these things.

**Unmeet**, Unfit ; unworthy.

**Unmeet.....Kings**, As if these things were quite unworthy to be thought about by a King.

**L. 552. Such like-hopes etc.**, Those kinds of hopes and fears and actions.

**Such-like**, Such ; those kinds of.

**As.....befall**, Those hopes, and fears, and actions, which are ordinary things to Kings ; things which happen to Kings in the routine or ordinary course of events ; about which there is nothing particular to be noted.

**L. 556. Huddled brake**, Litter of bracken (cf. l. 247).

**Four years etc**, It was now fourteen years since he had that strange dream at the peasant's hut.

**Once and again, Now and then.**

L. 558. **When slow.....light**, Now and then he remembered that dream, when he happened to pass a restless night, the time passing very wearily on account of sleeplessness.

L. 560. **Dawning.....light**, Day-break.

L. 557. **Remembered now**, Participle qualifying *dream*.

L. 561. **Remembered not**, *The dream was remembered not*; the dream was not remembered. (As regards syntax, it may be taken as a participle qualifying *dream* in l. 557 or as an *elliptical* sentence with the *subject* and the *auxiliary* verb "*was*" understood).

**To the ringing**, To the accompaniment of. (The preposition *to* is used to denote the sounds etc. that accompany an action.

L. 562. **Binging of the horn**, The clear blasts on the bugles.

L. 563. **Bit**, The part of the bridle which the horse holds in his mouth.

**Jingle of bits**, The jingling sounds made by the bridles of the hunting horses.

**Mingled shout**, Confused shouts of the huntsmen.

L. 564. **Same stream**, The "fateful" river (See l. 548) into which he had thrown the child.

L. 565. **To.....fly**, To hunt with hawks or falcons; to enjoy the sport of falconry. It was a favourite pastime of the Kings and nobility of Europe in the Middle Ages, and the Mogul Emperors in India, to hunt birds by means of trained hawks or falcons, which were kept hooded, till they were wanted to attack a bird shown to them flying across the sky.

**Drew anigh**, Drew nigh; came up nearer to.

**Brim**, Brink; bank.

L. 567. **Mill**, Water-mill for grinding corn.

**Millhead**, The upper part of the watermill, which feeds the water wheel. The lower part into which the water runs from the wheel is called the milltail (See line 733).

**Shook.....clack**, Seemed to vibrate with the shocks made by the movement of the water-wheel in regular succession.

**Grumble**, Jarring sounds, grating sounds.

**The gear within**, The machinery within ; the grating of the mill-stones inside.

**The roof.....din**, The roof which drowned the jarring sounds within.

**Crooning**, Cooing ; murmuring.

**Stack of hay**, Pile of hay.

**Twittering**, Chirping.

**L. 583. Anigh**, Near.

**L. 583. Thought good etc.**, Thought it good to dine near that pleasant spot.

**Therewith**, Upon making this decision.

**Sent to tell**, Sent a messenger to inform the miller.

**Intent**, Intention.

**L. 585. Who**, The miller.

**Held.....King**, The miller held the stirrup for the King to dismount, an act of respect towards the King.

**Stirrup**, A ring or hoop suspended by a strap from the saddle, for a horseman's foot while mounting or riding.

**Bareheaded**, Taking off his cap or hat (A sign of respectful salutation).

**Joyful.....thing**, Glad that the King should pay him the compliment to take his dinner there.

**Lit down**, Alighted down ; dismounted (*Lit* in this sense is obsolete).

**L. 588. Then led him**, Then the miller led him.

**Elm-beam**, A bough or plank of elm-wood, forming a rude bridge.

**Tide**, Season.

**Well at ease**, In ease and comfort.

**L. 593. Right**, Quite ; very.

**Drew anigh**, Approached ; came nearer.

**Bringing.....fare**, Bring to the King such rude articles of food as are to be found in the country.

L. 596. **Fare, Food.** (The nouns *plums, pears, junkets, cream,* and *honey* are in apposition to *fare* in l. 596).

**Wasp-bitten,** Bitten by wasps, stinging insects like the bees.

**Wavering,** Moving to and fro.

**Spire-like,** Tapering like a spire.

**Junkets,** Dishes of curds.

L. 601. **Regarded him,** Gazed at the face of the miller.

**Round-paunched,** Having a fat, round paunch or belly (The word *paunch* is generally used of the belly of animals, The word is pronounced as *paunsh*).

**Lank,** Thin

**Flaxen,** Long and flowing like flax.

**Most.....Michael,** Looking like a picture of the angel Michael.

**Michael,** One of the seven archangels, the highest order of the angels in heaven. Michael is mentioned in the Bible as having a special charge of the Israelites as a nation, as disputing with Satan about the body of Moses (the law-giver of the Jews,) and as fighting with Satan and his forces in the upper regions. In the New Testament (see *Rev. XVII, 7*) he fights in heaven against the dragon—"that old Serpent-called the Devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world." It is thus that his name became a symbol of that struggle against Evil which is the work of the Christian Church on earth. Michael figures largely in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where he is sent to fight against Satan, to dispossess Adam and Eve of Paradise after their Fall, and to foretell future events till the coming of Christ.

**Most like unto,** Resembling most ("*Like unto*" is obsolete).

**Some Michael,** Some figure, picture or statue of Michael.

L. 606. **Who.....wall,** Some picture or sculpture showing Michael in his great fight with the dragon [*i. e.* Satan, *vide* note *supra*), painted or carved out upon the wall of some great abbey or cathedral.



**Minister,** The church of a monastery, or one to which a monastery has been attached ; sometimes a cathedral church.

L. 604 to 609. **Right.....seemed,** This is the first introduction of the hero of the poem as a grown up *boy*. He had been introduced to us before as a new-born babe. It will be seen that the poet speaks of his (the hero's *first* appearance as a boy in terms of high praise, comparing him to the Archangel Michael.

**Miller's kin,** Any relation of the miller.

**The dame .....stripling,** The mother of this young boy.

**In.....yore,** In former years.

**Fain were I,** I should be very glad to see.

L. 615. **Were,** Would be ; should be (*Subjunctive*).

**If.....thou,** To see whether the lady has a greater resemblance to the boy than you.

L. 626. **Liker,** (*Obsolete*) More like.

**My dame,** My wife.

**But for,** But as regards.

**Begat,** Was the father of.

**Did lie, etc.,** Nor is my wife his mother.

**In labour, i. e.,** Child-labour.

**Outcast,** Castaway ; abandoned (the usual meaning of *outcast* is *exiled*, here it means rejected or abandoned to the elements).

**Forlorn,** Quite lost ; forsaken ; wretched.

**We found.....to-day,** (The sentence structure is confused and not to be imitated). It is now fourteen years since we found him, a forsaken child.

L. 624. **So.....away,** The time has passed away so quickly.

**Quick,** (*Adj. for adv.*) Quickly.

L. 626 **A.....remembered,** Remembered a day and incident he had almost forgotten. (Observe that the word "*remembered*" is to be pronounced as making *four* syllables, viz., *re-mem-ber-ed*).

**Troubled.....thereat,** At the recollection of which his face showed that he was somewhat disturbed. (He remembered his attempt to drown the peasant's child and now sees that his attempt had proved vain).

**L. 628. Thought.....that,** While he was distracted with various thoughts.

**L. 629. The man,** The miller.

**As.....met,** As they looked at each other.

**A great.....heart,** His heart was seized with a great fear.

**Shrank,** Received ; cowered backward.

**Shuddering,** Trembling.

**Knowing.....hedge-vine,** Being scarcely in his senses to judge what wine it was he was drinking so deep. It was not the choice wine served at his royal table, but a coarse wine, prepared from the wild vine creeping about the hedges, that he was drinking with such avidity. But he had to do so to steady himself in his fear.

**L. 644-646. Then that hair, etc.,** When he contrasted the old and worn-out body and black hair of the miller's wife with golden hair, grey eyes, firm lips, etc., of the young lad, he was convinced that he could certainly not be the offspring of that woman, and he had a more vivid recollection of the woodman's baby child he had attempted to drown, which was a very sinful attempt.

**The carle,** The miller.

**How this befell,** How the event took place.

**A little.....hold,** It was too trifling an incident to be much cared for by great people. (*Prose order.*—A little thing to hold the thoughts, etc.)

**Enow,** (Obsolete) Enough.

**From.....abode,** From the market-place back to our home.

**L. 655. There.....men,** To our house which is lonely and lies far apart from the houses of other people.

**Since.....now,** Since the population of the country-side districts was then much smaller.

**Weared.....bent,** And being tired was bending over the panniers with which my mule was loaded.

**Pannier,** (From *panarium*, a bread-basket, from Latin *panis*, bread) One of two baskets slung across a horse or mule, for carrying light produce to market; baskets.

**From out the stream,** Rising up from the river.

**Therewith presently,** Immediately after that.

**That.....stayed,** A rude box which had been stopped.

**By.....weed,** By a thick growth of clustering weeds.

**Tangled, Confused;** clustering together confusedly.

**Youngling,** The young child (see note L. 380).

**Dismounting.....him,** I dismounted and waded through the water to save the child.

**Wade,** Walk through water.

**Whose.....sevin,** The child's cradle box was about to sink with the child.

L. 670. **Was.....die,** Was on the point of dying.

L. 671. **Bare, Bore;** brought.

**Cherished,** Treated with fostering care.

**No.....father,** Nobody came to acknowledge the child as his own and take it away.

**Father, (Verb)** To say that he was its father.

**Some.....him,** I am looking forward to some future day when I shall have to lose him.

**Royal seed, Royal blood.** (Something in the aspect of the growing boy made the old woman think that he was of royal birth).

**Unmeet, Unworthy. Unmeet for us,** Too noble to associate with us.

**Soothly,** (Anglo-Saxon *soth* = truth) Truly.

**Whose name etc.,** He is named Michael because he came to us about the time of Mischaelmas.

**Michaelmas,** The *mass* or *feast* of St. Michael, a Roman Catholic festival celebrated about the end of September.

**See, sire etc.,** She shows the king the box in which the baby was lying when she found him.

**What he should see, What was to be seen on the box,**  
viz. the figure of a lion in red.

L. 694 **Remembered**, See note on l. 626.

**Who of these, Who amongst my present companions?**

**Had cast about it, Had wrapped about it.**

**The lovely autumn place, The beautiful river-side**  
lovely with autumn fruits (see lines 570-72 and also lines  
580 and 685.

**New-found.....foe**, The face of his newly discovered  
enemy about whom the prophecy had been made so long ago.

**Forcing.....merriment**, Forcing himself to laugh a  
hollow hypocritical laugh, now and then, to divert the atten-  
tion of his companions from his real thoughts and feelings.

**Yet.....changed**, Some of them however *did* observe the  
change of manner and temper that had come upon him.

**Men of the wood, Huntsmen.**

**Remembered them**, (*them* is reflexive object) Recollec-  
ted. (They now had some vague recollection about the new-  
born baby brought away by the king at another hunt about  
fourteen years ago. )

**Trembled.....it**, They were afraid to give out their  
secret thought, and feared that notwithstanding their attempt  
to conceal it, somehow or other it might leak out, which  
might lead to serious consequences.

**Some bird etc.**, This idiomatic expression is often used  
for the unexpected communication or disclosure of secrets,  
against the publication of which one has been carefully taking  
precautions.

**The morrow come, The next day** ( Nominative absolute)  
729.

**Gathering wage for hell**, (This is a strong and  
original expression) Adding to his wickedness and thereby  
earning his right of free admission to hell.

**Wage**, (Originally the same as *gage*=pledge) The re-  
ward of service; what one earns by his labour or service.  
This man's *earning* or *deserving* entitled him to the lower

world. He did *service* to wickedness, the power of evil. The king wanted him now to do one more evil act.

L. 721 He.....muttered, He came from the king's presence, after a secret conversation, with a wicked smile, muttering the words that follow.

L. 723. Well.....St. Betide, May St. Peter send me good luck.

Betide Happen.

Well betide, May that which happens to me be good, not evil.

St. Peter, (Vocative Case). He prays to St. Peter, (the great saint of the Catholic Church, whose successors the Popes of Rome claimed themselves to be.)

L. 724. They.....kings, Those men are lucky who have not to do loyal service to a king.

L. 725-26. Since.....need, For men, who are not doing loyal service to a king, may at most only go to hell for their wicked actions, but they have no other fear. (He means to suggest that persons like him may have fear of punishment even on earth. This fear is expressed in the next three verses.)

Each for his need, Each man to secure his own objects; each one will at most go to hell for wicked acts done in attaining his personal objects.

And.....food, If it is a fact that this boy, when he was a newly born baby, who had never even eaten a particle of food, could not be drowned by the river-water, surely he might manage to live secure, even in spite of his new undertaking to put him to death. (In such a case he would himself be in some danger at the hands of the boy in future).

Outlive.....day, Survive this day; pass safe through the cruel deed I am to do to-day.

Gat, (Obsolete) Got.

Equerry, (Lat-*Equus*, a horse) One who has the charge of horses or stables; (in England) an officer under the King's Master of the Horse),

**L. 733. Mill-tail,** The lower part of a water-mill into which the water runs from the wheel.

**Dace,** (Also spelt *dare* or *dart*). A small river-fish so called from the quickness of its motion.

**His float,** The cork on a fishing line. He was amusing himself with angling, but the river-fish were careless and the strong current was constantly driving away his fishing-line from them.

**Thinking of etc.** He was musing upon the dark face of the King.

**L. 737. That.....awe,** The face at which he saw the previous day all the members of the hunting party gazing apparently with love and fear.

**Wondering.....lords,** While lost in astonishment at seeing so many great people.

**Lost.....words,** Lost even one word of the narrative told by the miller's wife, as to how she had found the boy.

**Housewife,** The mistress of a house.

**Still,** Constantly.

**Still he etc,** He noticed constantly that the King was all along looking at him with astonishment.

**Strange.....there,** As something quite unexpected to be found at a miller's cottage.

**So in his heart,** He thought secretly in his own mind.

**To.....part,** That he would play the part of some king or hero; that he would act as though he were to be a king.

**In .....life,** In the tragic drama of human life.

**Play life,** The metaphor of a *drama* is used here. Human life is often compared to a drama, and the world to a stage. This metaphor is constantly met with in the world's classical literature, but is especially familiar from the famous soliloquy in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, beginning with:—

“All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players etc.” (Shakespeare: *As You Like It*, Act II Sc. VII).

**Wild play of life, Melodrama of life ; the exciting turns and adventures of human life.**

**Made.....fight,** He made his imagination invent a series of wild episodes, or plots of fictitious narratives, in which he figured himself as the great hero, doing noble deeds and speaking noble words.

**He.....yore,** The King's squire, Samuel.

**Like a King's man,** As a King's servant might be expected to be.

**With.....embroidered,** The sleeves of his coat were so heavily embroidered with gold, that it might be said that his hard brown hands were covered with gold.

**A plumed hat,** A hat with a feather at the top.

**A cutting sword,** A sword meant for cutting rather than for thrusting.

**Fit.....lord,** Such a handsome sword as a lord might carry.

**Hilt, Handle.**

**Was.....ground,** Was carved and painted with leaves in a green colour upon a golden surface.

L. 759. **A golden ground,** A golden back-ground or surface.

L. 760. **Whose ..enwound,** A silver scroll was described in the picture on the handle as passing round the stem of a tree the leaves of which were (as already described in l. 759) represented in green on a golden back-ground.

**A silver scroll,** The scroll was represented in a silver colour coiled round the stem of the tree with its leaves represented in green.

**Scroll,** A ribbon or a paper bearing an inscription upon it ; the representation in an artistic design or picture of an inscription. (This is the meaning here, there was only the *representation* of a paper bearing an inscription in the picture).

**Enwound,** Wound ; coiled ; curled up.

**Charged with etc.,** Bearing this inscription in black.

**Writ,** ( Obsolete ) Written.

**For.....back,** For an enemy who is killed will never come to trouble you again.

L. 757 to 62. **And round.....back,** This long description of the knife, going into *six* lines is to be noted, the knife itself required no such lengthy description. But (1) the description of the knife gives incidentally an insight into the man's character, for the legend on the knife "strike! for no dead man etc." illustrates also the character of the bearer of the knife; (2) it illustrates the author's habit of rousing the reader's interest in very small matters; (3) it shows the artistic temperament and training of the poet (See the Introduction); (4) it keeps up the colour of mediaeval times and manners which pervades the whole story; (5) it was a common custom in the mediaeval times to have rich decorations upon swords and knives, and especially to carve out upon them mottos, or legends as they were called, consisting of one or two pithy verses or epigrammatic sentences; (6thly) the description itself is very beautiful, and remarkable for presenting an intricate subject in a faithful and realistic manner without much use of technical terms.

**With beating heart,** His heart beating with expectation.

**Drew.....rein,** Stopped his horse.

L. 766. **Not.....be,** His dream was going to prove true.

L. 767. **His dream,** See ll. 743 to 747.

**Below his breath,** Almost in a whisper, muttered to himself.

**Shalt.....desting,** You will prove the truth of the prophecy.

**Spite of all,** In spite of all attempts.

**Till crown,** Till you become a king.

**Arched crown,** An imperial crown with four arches springing from the circular ring and meeting over the centre of the crown. An ordinary crown, worn by vassal kings, consisted of a golden ring or circlet adorned with an ornamented border. An imperial crown has the arches in addition.



**Tell to me**, Obsolete for "*tell me*".

L. 776. **And.....say**, And I have to deliver to him a message.

**Thou.....be**, You must be a servant of the king.

**Nor.....heed**, Did not care; paid no regard to.

**Nibbling dace**, (See note on l. 735) The little fish that came to swallow the bait attached to his fishing lines.

**Until.....pass**, He is waiting for his people to bring him his mare as he is preparing to go to town for marketing.

**Household gear**, Sundry articles of household use.

**Being made fast**, Having tied down the squire's horse to a tree etc. that he might not escape.

L. 789. **The miller**, Object to "found".

**Scroll**, A paper containing a writing.

**Do.....ill**, Obey my instructions without any fear of harm.

**Little.....can**, I am master of little skill in learning.

L. 796. **Lettered skill**, Skill (*i.e.*, knowledge) to read.

L. 796. **I can**, (From Anglo-Saxon *cunnan*, to know, *i.e.*, know how to do a thing, hence to be able) I know. (In this sense the verb is now obsolete).

L. 797. **My dame**, My wife. His wife knew how to read, but he did not. His wife had leisure to learn, he had none,—picture of old English Society in the lower ranks of life.

**Well-written**, *i.e.*, She can read a legible hand, not otherwise.

**At good need**, When there is a great need.

**Suffice it**, etc, Let it suffice you (*i.e.*, let it be sufficient for you) to satisfy yourself that this is the king's seal, and I'll tell you the contents.

**Foundling**, A little child found deserted. For the suffix in "*foundling*" see note on "youngling" in line 380.

**Downcast**, Cast down with sorrow; dejected.

**Aught.....me**, Nor is he in any way related to me.

**Nonetheless would I**, etc., Nevertheless I did intend to make him my heir to all the property I leave behind at my death.

**Wherein.....skill,** He has something more than the skill of an apprentice or beginner in the art of managing a mill.

**No 'prentice skill,** (Figure of *litotes*) More than the skill or knowledge of an apprentice.

**'Prentice** Apprentice; beginner; one who is a pupil under some master to learn some trade under him. In old England, these apprentices had to board and lodge and work in their master's family for a period of seven years.

**Young.....is,** Though he is young.

**A life.....bliss,** A happy life with plenty of good cheer (i. e. food).

**A fair.....wife,** There is a fair maid *whom* I looked for to be his wife (the relative *who* or *whom* is understood.)

**'Gan swim, etc.,** He became giddy with joy.

**Thoughts.....praise,** Thoughts of becoming a nobleman and winning glory.

**Forgat.....seemed,** He forgot the happy days he had lived with the happy dreams of greatness they had brought, which were now on the point of proving true.

**Near fulfilment,** On the point of being accomplished or realised.

**But some fair place,** He did not seem to be looking at the hill, but some imaginary castle or palace there.

**Made.....face,** A fair mansion or castle which appeared wonderful, with new faces constantly appearing in it.

**And all.....be,** He was thinking of his future prospects.

**O good soul, O good miller.**

**Thou thinkest then, Do you then think?**

**D. 831. As.....is,** As our King thinks this young boy to be.

**L. 830. This.....men,** Do you think the life of a miller is the proper life for persons of high birth?

**Where lies thy bliss,** What your idea of happiness is.

**Turned shamefaced,** Blushed with shame. (In his modesty he could not show himself dissatisfied with his life at the mill, in the miller's presence).

L. 834. **Waked from his dream**, See lines 743 to 747.

**Ranger**.....wood, Forester ; one who supervizes a forest or park.

**Saith**, Says.

**I draw**.....bow, I shoot well with bow and arrows ; I am a good archer or bowman or marksman.

**Enow**, (Obsolete) Enough.

**Muster**, Gathering or assembly.

**Ere many**.....by, In a few months.

**To join the muster**, To take part in the shooting competition.

**Try to win**, etc., Try to win the prize for shooting, which consists of a bag of florins.

**Florin**, A silver coin, now equal to two shillings. (Originally coined at Florence, stamped with the *lily flower*, the national badge of Florence—Latin *flos*, a flower).

**Folk**, People.

L. 842. **On Barnaby the bright**, On St. Barnabas day (the 11th of June), on which day many fairs and festivals were held at the country towns.

**Market town**, A town having the privilege of holding a public market, where buyers and sellers gathered from all the villages around.

L. 844 to 849. The substance of these lines is that the river gave a good opportunity for fishing or angling, which was another of his amusements.

**Weedy**.....stream, The courses of the neighbouring river which is full of weeds.

**Bream**, A fresh-water fish of the carp family.

**The bubbles of the bream**, The bubbles made in the river water by the bream as it glides.

**Chub**, A small fat river-fish.

**Fly**, A fish-hook dressed with silk etc. in imitation of a fly.

**Take the fly**, Try to swallow the fish-hook.

**Pike**, A greedy fresh-water fish, so called from its pointed snout, which has a fanciful resemblance to the pike formerly used by foot-soldiers.

L. 848. **Great chub, long pike,** Notice the *appropriate* adjectives. The chub is fat or big, the pike is long with a pointed snout.

L. 848. **Basking lie,** Lie in the warm sunshine.

**Outside.....weed,** Exposed to the open sun-shine beyond reach of the weeds.

L. 835 to 855. **Fair sir.....chatter,** These lines describe the boy's amusements during his life at the mill, first archery and marksmanship, which may be associated with hunting in the forest (ll. 835 to 842); *2ndly* fishing or angling (ll. 843 to 849); and *3rdly* fowling, that is, shooting and catching various kinds of fowls, including water-fowls (ll. 850 to 855). These amusements make his life "Sweet and good" (l. 835) and make the place "a fair place all the year" (l. 856).

**Wood-cock,** A bird, allied to the snipe, which frequents woods.

**Suipe,** A bird, with a long bill, which frequents marshy places

**When.....go,** When the swallows disappear in winter. The swallow is a migratory bird and appears with the summer in European countries and disappears with the winter.

**Woodcock.....go,** We have plenty of wood-cocks and snipe shooting, in winter, when the swallows disappear.

L. 852. **Flies.....reeds,** The water-hen flies so low that its feet almost touch the reeds. Water-fowls have generally webbed feet and being at the same time rather fat, cannot fly very high.

**Plover,** (Pronounce *pluver*) A wellknown wading bird. (literally *rain-bird* from Latin *pluvia*, rain, so called because associated with rainy weather).

**Meads,** Meadows; fields on the bank of the river.

**Stare,** (Obsolete) Starling (*starling* is a diminutive form of the obsolete word *stare*); a bird about the size of the blackbird.

**Certes,** (Obsolete) Certainly.

**Eyeing him, Looking at him closely.**

**Thou.....breeding, You thow that your education has been like that of a common peasant.**

**Churl, A countryman; an ill-bred surly fellow (Anglo-Saxon *ceorl*, a countryman; from the same root as *carle*).**

**By my head, On my life; I declare on my life (the expression is an oath intended to make a strong affirmation).**

**In.....face, Very much in spite of your handsome and noble appearance,**

**In despite of, In spite of.**

**In foul despite of, Foully in spite of; very much in spite of.**

**Take heart, Have courage (i.e., have courage to separate from this place, because I am taking you to a better one).**

**L. 862. Nor.....lad, There is no need to tell that the young lad has been removed to be brought up as a courtier.**

**Know them, Acknowledge acquaintance with them.**

**He.....twain, He will not like, after one or two years, to be known to have had acquaintance with them (i.e., he will be such a courtier that his pride will prevent him from acknowledging your neighbours as his acquaintances in the past).**

**In a.....twain, in one or two years.**

**Yet.....vain, However don't think your having found the boy will be of no advantage to you (the full meaning however is:—don't think your having found the boy and the care you have taken of the foundling will all go without reward).**

**Store of gold, Plenty of gold; a purse full of gold coins.**

**Hinds, Peasant labourers; farm labourers.**

**Let.....play, Let your mill labourers have a holiday.**

**For.....thee, For the money contained in the bag is enough to pay the purchase price of your mill and of your life and liberty.**

**L. 872. Pensively, Thoughtfully; anxiously.**

**Broken dream, See lines 743—747.**

**For.....doubtful,** Doubtful whether his dream of future greatness was to prove false.

**For.....seem,** *Prose order* "for his broken dream did seem doubtful and away", i.e., it seemed to him that his dream of future greatness was doubtful, or false, or at least far distant to be realised or to prove true.

**Amidst.....mockeries,** In the midst of the rude, jesting conversation of the squire.

**But .....ears,** His ears were filled with the loving and earnest manner in which the miller made him his farewell greeting.

**L. 879. Stamped, etc.,** Signs of impatience to start on the journey. The squire wanted him impatiently to accompany him on his return journey. He did not give the boy much time for reflection or even for farewell greetings.

**Plucked.....sleeves,** Pulled him by the sleeves of his coat.

**Therewithal,** Upon this; therewith; thereupon.

**Old abode,** Old residence.

**With.....face,** With tears; weeping as he did so.

**L. 883. Even .....turned,** Just as he turned.

**From out the house,** Out of the house.

**Fon that.....pay,** My sorrow at having to separate from you today is the price I pay for the delight I have found in your company for so many years in the past.

**For that ect.;** For the fact that etc. i. e. on account of, or in compensation for the fact that etc.

**L. 889. May'st thou etc,** She gives him his farewell blessing.

**When.....estate,** When you become a great man.

**Estate,** Status; position; rank.

**L. 892-94. That in our.....had,** *Object* to "remembering" in l. 890.

**Early and late,** At all times.

**L. 893. The house.....sad,** (In apposition to *house* in l. 892). The house which your going away must plunge into sorrow.

**Thou.....had,** That we gave you the best of all we possessed (*i.e.* the best of our food, and clothing, and comforts).

L. 895. **And love.....twain,** Object to "*hadst*" in l. 894.

**Love.....twain,** Sincere love from both of us.

L. 896. **Whose.....again,** Whose youthful innocence and lively ways made us feel youthful and lively; by watching his boyish ways, they felt themselves for the time being, restored to their earlier youthfulness.

**Hearts.....grows,** Our hearts which now in your absence will fast grow old. (His presence kept up their youthfulness, but when he was gone, they will fast feel the effects of old age).

**Now.....gone,** Now *that* you are gone; since you are now going.

L. 898. **Enow,** Enough; please end your farewell speech.

**The.....wait etc.,** The King will be waiting for his dinner till the arrival of this boy, who is to be a lord, at the palace.

**Upon.....word,** After saying this.

**Half afeared,** Half afraid.

**Eager.....dream,** Eagerly as he felt his life's dream was soon to be fulfilled.

**Brim, Bank.**

**Without word,** In silence.

**Sedge,** Coarse grass growing in swamps and rivers.

**Formless tune,** Uncertain or indistinct notes or songs.

**Twittered,** Chirped.

**Reach by reach,** Stage after stage.

L. 914-17. **The hopeful dream....flight,** The hopeful dream of the young boy (who was too young to think of death and so bold that he knew no fear) drove away all painful memories; the hopeful spirit of the young lad asserted itself and repelled all painful thoughts.

L. 915. **Too.....near,** The young boy who in the height of his youthfulness never thought of death.

**Who scare.....fear,** Who did not know what fear was. (A story is told of Lord Nelson, in his childhood, when the

future hero having strayed away from home a bird's-nesting and being brought back after a diligent search, his grandmother expressed wonder that fear did not drive him home; upon which, it is said, Nelson innocently replied, "Fear! grand-mamma, I never saw fear—what is it?" Southey's *Life of Nelson*, Chapter I. The young boy in the poem had a fearless disposition like that of Nelson in his childhood).

Remorseful memories, Painful memories; the sorrowful thought of having to leave the mill and the miller's family and all he held dear.

L. 918. **Showed**, (*Intransitive*) Appeared to him.

**Lovely.....bright**, The whole world appeared lovely and bright to him.

**The harsh voice**, Namely the voice of the King's squire, Samuel.

**The pain**, The thought that the squire was mocking or scolding him.

**Other.....Samuel**, Samuel was busy thinking of other matters.

**Held**, Kept occupied.

**King's abode**, The King's palace.

**Samuel.....therefrom**, Samuel turned away from the road leading to the palace.

**The great horse**, The war-horse upon which Samuel and Michael were both mounted.

**Thundered**, Went thundering over the bridge.

**Made on toward**, Went forward in the direction of.

**That other day**, The day on which the squire, at the King's order, had tried to drown Michael, when a new-born baby.

**Nothing.....way**, Knowing the way very well.

**Dwells.....wood**, Does the King then live in the forest.

L. 934. **Where.....good**, Where he pleases. (The word "that" after "Where" in l. 934 is redundant. Where that = where).

**Quoth**, Said.



**It.....dwell,** He is pleased to dwell with.

**Black monks,** It seems from line 1565 that this name is here used to stand for the Dominican friars. Usually the name *Blackfriars* is given to the Dominican friars and the name *Black Monks* is generally applied to the Benedictines. The use of the name is due to the colour of the clothing worn by them. The Benedictine order was founded in the sixth century and the Dominican friars were also called the *preaching friars* or *black friars*.

**Curst be, etc.;** He curses both the king and his intended victim, the boy.

**Who.....do,** On account of whom I am required to do these sinful jobs.

**When.....pray,** At a time when I should sit at home saying my prayers.

**Who draw, etc.,** I who am fast approaching my death ; I who am so old as to be very near to death.

**Forth .....spurred,** He rode forward.

**And.....word,** However he muttered to himself these last words.

**Yea, Yes ; verily.**

**Of.....born,** Of all the days that ever were unfortunate, that day was the most unfortunate on which I was born. **May God's curse fall on that unauspicious day.** [Having cursed the king, and the boy, on account of whom he is required to act in a sinful manner, he finally curses the day of his birth which marked him out for such a sinful destiny].

**Therewith,** Having said this.

**His.....piteous,** It seemed that the man's lot was a hard lot and one that would excite our pity.

**When.....told,** As he remembered how the story of his life could have been easily altered from his earliest years.

L. 951. **Each,** That is, Samuel and Michael.

**Each.....still,** Each was following in his mind the train of his own thoughts.

**Breast the hill, Climb the hill.**

**Turned him round,** (Obsolete) Turned round ; turned himself round.

**He..... wide,** He saw the bright meadows, extending before him far and wide.

**Golden.....green,** The meadows appeared with a bright golden colour, in the midst of the green, which was disappearing. (The green leaves disappearing, as the autumn was wearing itself out).

**L. 958. Joyous.....unseen,** The meadows seemed to be enlivened by the presence of various forms of insect life, whether visible or invisible.

**Hem,** Surround ; edge ; form a border upon.

**When presently,** Shortly afterwards when he turned round to look back.

**Uncounted,** Numberless.

**He.....tall,** He saw any number of tall trees growing there, stem to stem, forming a sort of wall.

**L. 966. Spruce-woods,** Groves of spruce-trees.

**L. 966. Spruce,** A coniferous tree, growing in Prussia, Norway, and northern countries generally, of Europe and America ; a tree resembling the fir or pine tree.

**Odorous,** Fragrant ; sweet-smelling. (The spruce like the pine breathes a sweet smell. The sprouts of the spruce were once used for making beer).

**Melancholy sound etc.,** The dismal sounds made by the rustling of the spruce trees.

**Met.....wayfarers,** The way-farers or travellers found themselves surrounded by the spruce-groves with their dismal rustling.

**Far off.....spots,** The light of the sun could penetrate the thick wood only at some points like the faint light of the stars at night.

**From.....shed,** Over-head through the branches the sunlight filtered down like faint twilight.

**Not.....been,** Michael had never been there.

**Nor.....woods,** Never before had he gone beyond the sunny fields to enter into those shady groves.

**Mirk, Dark ; shadowy ; murky** (*Mirk is obsolete for murky*).

**Gazed round etc.,** Looked round to see strange things.

**Mysteries, Strange secrets ; romantic things ; miraculous forms or things** about which we only read in the romances or fairy tales.

**Old wife's tale,** Many fairy or folk-lore stories told by old women to the younger members of the family.

**Wood-cutters etc.,** In apposition to "tale". The meaning is stories which spoke of giant-like wood-cutters etc.

**The ancient.....place,** The original dwellers and lords of the forest regions. (The word *remnant* is in apposition to "*wood-cutter*").

**Raiment,** Dress ; clothing.

**Remnant,** Survivors of an ancient race (*literally means remainder.*)

**Trolls, Dwarfs** who lived and worked underground. (He expected to see races of giants as well as dwarfs living in the woods, as he had heard fairy tales about them).

**Hammering trolls, Dwarfs** working at underground smithies. (They were supposed to be skilled workers in metal.)

**Dancers of the faerie,** Fairies leading a dance on the green.

**Faerie,** A race of fabled supernatural beings also called *fays*. The term *faerie* which is a sort of collective singular is also used distributively to denote a *member* of the race, in which case the later spelling "*fairy*" is generally used.

**L. 983-85 Who.....behind,** According to the ancient stories the fairies appear beautiful when seen in front, but behind their forms appear ugly and shrivelled up.

**Until.....out,** Until the wind subsided.

**Being.....trees,** Being shut off by the trees.

**L. 988 Michael.....drear,** In the midst of those strange forms which his fearful imagination had created from nowhere, he gradually became sleepy.

**Nor noted etc.,** He did not notice how the time passed.

**Until.....wood,** Until at last they came to the boundary of the spruce-tree wood.

**Spruce-tree wood,** See note on L. 966.

**With.....blood,** With a tingling sensation.

**Bethought him,** (Reflexive objective) Recollected; tried to recollect.

**He carried.....now,** (The *relative* pronoun "*whom* is understood after *him*), he carried as a baby the boy with whom he was riding now.

**Brow,** Ridge; edge.

**Firs ended etc.,** There were no further fir-trees when they came to the edge of a hill.

**Gravelly,** Consisting of gravel, or full of gravel (Gravel=small stones intermixed with sand).

**Nowise fair,** In no way fair; in no sense fair.

**Clear.....brake,** At first the slopes of the valley were bare of vegetation excepting brake (or bracken) or thickets.

**Till.....rough,** Until as the valley descended lower, rough alders were growing in the midst of tall rushes.

**Alder,** A tree usually growing in moist soil.

**Crabbed,** Harsh; rough.

**Winding,** Flowing in a zig-zag course.

**Clayey mounds,** Masses of clay.

**L. 1006. Oozy, Slimy.** (Ooze=soft mud).

**Drew rein,** Stopped his horse.

**Awhile,** For a short time.

**The ground,** The valley.

**Glade,** An open space in a wood.

**'Twixt,** Between.

**Bittern,** A bird of the heron family.

**Boom,** The hollow cry of the bittern.

**Without, etc.,** Outside the shade of the fir-wood.

L. 1114. And though.....come, Though they were now come outside, etc.

Red and low, etc., Yet the sun seemed to be shining red, low, near the tree-tops, as if it were going to set.

Hardihead (Obsolete for *hardihood*) Courage. In despite of hardihead, Notwithstanding all his courage.

Had a mortal dread, Was terribly afraid.

Of.....alone, Of being alone in the wood in the dark. (He had superstitious fear, especially as apparently he had been told to murder the boy).

When.....done, When he had done the fatal deed, the execution of which had been entrusted to him.

Clutched.....behind, Being roused from his reverie by the brisk wind he held more firmly to the strapping of the cradle where he was seated behind the squire.

My horse.....slonghy, Even without your additional weight, my own weight is enough to cause the horse to sink in this muddy soil.

Slough, (Pronounce slow, *ow* being sounded as in *how*) A hollow filled with mud; a soft bog or marsh.

And haste.....trees, Make haste or we shall have to spend the night beneath these trees.

Be as dry.....us, We shall be drenched by the autumn dew during the night.

L. 1024 to 1041. Get to the ground, etc., The squire is trying to contrive a pretence so that he might be able to kill the boy.

Grown.....life, Feeling a freshness of life and spirits.

About.....hung, Which was hanging about his neck.

Tightened rein, Tightened the rein of the horse quite at the bottom of the valley.

Girths, The straps of the saddle.

L. 1043. Stayed.....glad, Stopped his joyful song.

Noting.....voice, In the midst of his own joyfulness not observing the tone of the squire's voice.

**Unto.....hand,** Applied himself to tightening the strap.  
**Straining, Endeavouring.**

**What was tight,** As a matter of fact the girths were already tight enough, and did not require any tightening at all. (It was a pretence of the squire to bring him within reach of his blow. He had first got him to dismount, as it was not easy to kill one who was seated at his back ; and now he plays this trick to bring him near enough for a blow).

**L. 1049. Deep.....side,** Struck deep in the boy's side.

**Staggering, Reeling ; tottering.**

**Who.....pale,** On his own part, the murderer looked ghastly pale.

**None the less, Nevertheless.**

**Lit down, Alighted ; dismounted.**

**Lest.....him,** Fearing that one blow might not be enough to finish the work.

**Since.....yet,** As the boy's eyes were closed, he wanted to ascertain whether he was alive or dead, by feeling the palpitations of his heart. He found that the boy's heart was yet beating, showing that he was still alive.

**Therewithal.....fall,** Upon this he prepared to handle the knife again in order to inflict a second blow.

**Far off, etc.,** Thus the boy's life is providentially saved.

**Listening.....in vain,** On trying to listen, he found there was indeed some cause for alarm ; he heard the tinkling of a bell.

**Nor.....dread,** He did not try to quiet his fear by calm reasoning.

**The angel of the dead,** (See lines 1088, 1089) The angel is a Greek word meaning messenger).

**Was drawing nigh,** Was approaching.

**The slayer to slay,** He feared the angel might kill the murderer.

**Thought.....slay,** In his imagination he thought that an angel was coming to lead the soul of the dead and that he might punish the murderer.

**Ere.....away,** When the soul of the dead boy had scarcely left his body.

**One dreadful moment,** For one moment which was full of great terror to him.

**Then.....horse,** Then he madly galloped away, mounted on his fine horse.

**That maddened too,** The horse likewise, being maddened, galloped right through the dense fir forest.

**Close-set, Dense.**

**Not.....stone,** Did not stop on account of any hindrance on the way, such as a tree or a rock.

**Stock, Tree ; stem ; trunk.**

**Nor stayed.....stone,** The alliterative effect of three words beginning with the letters "*st*" in this verse may be noted, *viz.*, *stayed*, *stock*, and *stone*.

**The furious.....done,** At the end of his furious career.

**Anigh, Nigh ; near.**

**Mazed.....dread,** Confounded by his sense of guilt and terror.

**Wandered.....might,** Spent the whole night walking home.

**At.....light,** Early at dawn.

**Half-dead, i.e.,** With fatigue and terror.

**Till the opening,** Till the time for opening the gate.

**By.....ring, etc.,** By the use of a special signet-ring belonging to the king he gained admission to the private chamber of the King. (He showed the ring and was admitted, as entitled to such private entry, having that key in his possession).

**Signet-ring,** A seal-ring ; a ring for sealing important papers or documents. (Great persons and all kinds of officials had constant occasion to make use of signet-rings).

**What.....told,** Told what he had done.

**How.....gone,** What was the result of the whole event.

**Surely.....joy,** Surely the circumstance which put me into a great fright (*viz.*, the tinkling of a bell which he

attributed to the angels) will be a cause of joy to you. (Because the king will be glad to hear that the boy is dead, as the squire believed, as he thought from the tinkling of the bell that the angels were come to conduct the soul of the dead boy to heaven).

L. 1088. **Angels**, *Object* to "*brought*".

**That.....lie**, That he may repose in peace where Abraham reposes in heaven with his offspring.

**Abraham**, The ancient Hebrew patriarch, father of Isaac and Ishmael and husband of Sarah, who inculcated belief in the one true God, and to whom was made the spiritual promise that "in his seed all nations should be blessed". He was the ancestor of the Jews, the Arabs and various nomadic tribes.

**So.....prophecy**, The prophecy, which had so much agitated the king, was thus according to Samuel, brought to an end; that prophecy was not going to be fulfilled and the King should not worry himself over it.

L. 1091. **Nathless**, (Obsolete), None the less; nevertheless.

**Scowled**, Frowned.

**Ill content**, Not satisfied; not pleased.

**A man of war**, A soldier.

**To.....will**, To carry out my orders.

**Who.....skill**, Who possessed the necessary strength and intelligence to carry out my orders.

L. 1095. **Thou.....face**, You return here like an effeminate coward.

**Bewildered.....race**, Confounded with your headlong flight.

**Race**, This refers to the headlong flight of Samuel after hearing the tinkling of the bell.

**And.....fear**, And acting like a senseless fool on account of your fear; (the king thought that the fellow was almost out of his wits with fears).

**Idiot**, A fool; a senseless fellow.



**Nor.....here,** You don't bring me any proof to show that the boy is really dead.

**Got away, Got away;** went away.

**L. 1099. He rose,** The King rose.

**Brooding,** (Qualifies "he" i. e. the king) Thinking anxiously.

**L. 1101. All things.....deemed,** Thought that after all the event had not turned out so unfavourably as in his fear he had first thought.

**That.....flourishing,** That after all the boy was dead and the King's royal line might still continue.

**There with,** Upon this i. e. when this hopeful thought came into his mind.

**Both.....gave,** Gave money and various kinds of rewards to Samuel.

**But.....save,** But these presents did not serve to lengthen Samuel's life

**Not.....sin,** Who was more advanced in the paths of sin than he was advanced in age; he was a hardened sinner, and more bowed down by his sins than by his age.

**Ere the winter,** Before winter came (i. e. in a few months after the attempted murder, which event took place in autumn.)

**Within.....asleep,** He was buried in a part of a (cathedral) church which is appropriated to the church choir or singers (that is to say was buried like a person of distinction in the church itself, not in the common churchyard where ordinary persons are buried. Evidently the king showed his gratitude by granting him a splendid burial).

**Was laid asleep,** (Figure of *Euphemism*) Was buried.

**Minister,** (Derived from the root of the word *monastery*) Properly a church attached to a monastery, also a cathedral church (i. e. a church under the charge of a bishop). Only persons of illustrious birth or distinction are buried within the precincts of a cathedral. The word "minster" will remind the student of *Westminster Abbey*, where some of the greatest sons of England have had their burial.

**Choir,** (1) A chorus or band of singers, especially those belonging to a church ; (2) the part of the church appropriated to the singers ; (3) the part of a cathedral separated from the nave by a rail or screen, ( which seems to be the meaning in the text. )

**L. 1110. With.....keep,** With images (*i. e.* statues ) of saints carved at the head of his tomb to keep a holy watch over his body ; monumental images of saints decked out his tomb. ( There is a gentle touch of sarcasm in describing the saints as keeping a watch over the dead body of such a sinner. A visit to a cemetery may rouse a mournful vein of satire in a critical person when he observes the most pompous monuments raised over the graves of notorious villains. It was a custom in Europe in those early times. )

**Carven,** (Obsolete) Carved ; engraved ; sculptured.

**L. 1112. Felicity.** Happiness.

**L. 1114. A son etc.,** In *apposition* to " this " in l. 1113.

**Wherewith,** With whom.

**A son wherewith...gone,** A son *with whom* he might divide his joys and *who* might succeed him at his death. (The grammatical structure of the two adjectival phrases joined by " and " in l. 1115, both qualifying " son " in l. 1114, is irregular and involves a harsh *ellipsis* ; the relative pronoun " *who* " must be understood before " *reign* " in l. 1115).

**L. 1116. Save,** Except.

**Born.....air,** Born on the same night as Michael.

**Felt.....air,** *Periphrasis* (*i. e.* a round-about descriptive statement) for " *was born.* "

**Forlorn,** Wretched ; forsaken.

**Forlorn, alone etc.,** Michael entered the world amidst the most miserable circumstances, a curse to himself and a curse to his mother.

**L. 1118. Doubly curst,** A curse to himself as he entered the world in such wretchedness and a curse to his poor mother who died in the throes of child-birth.

L. 1119. This daughter, The heroine of the story is described for the first time. (Notice the frequent use of the letters *d* and *m* in this verse).

Was not wed, Was not yet *wedded* i. e. married.

Being.....prime, Being in the prime or first bloom of youth; being in the first bloom of maidenhood.

Prime, First bloom.

She.....May, Poetical *periphrasis* (round about description) for she was now eighteen years of age.

May, i. e. spring; she was now entering upon her eighteenth spring i. e. year. (*Synecdoche*, *part* being used for the *whole*. The *spring* is chosen to be mentioned by a poetical instinct, rather than the whole year, partly because the idea of *spring* is in some way connected with that of *youth*, partly perhaps because the events mentioned in the next paragraph really took place in spring).

L. 1124. Passed away, (Euphemism) Died.

Of the King, (Obsolete) By the King.

Dame, Lady.

More fertile, Capable of bearing more children.

A wily man, A cunning person.

With this intent, With this intention; with this object.

To spy the countries, To scout the surrounding countries.

Fresh, Youthful.

In.....him, Fit in all respects to be his wife.

Mate, Wife; consort.

It came to pass, It happened that.

Won, Got by marriage.

A year.....ago, He had lived with his second wife for a year, till the time when he first saw the youthful Michael, whom he had supposed to be dead as many years ago.

As custom was, As it was a custom of the time.

Unto a distant house, To a distant house.

For wordly bliss, To enjoy himself with the good things of this world.

His dame beloved, His sweet-heart.

**Play.....greenery,** Disport herself amidst the green grass and foliage of summer.

**Wont, Accustomed.**

**Erigone,** A princess who figures in Greek mythology. She was the daughter of Icarius, king of Attica a district of ancient Greece. According to the Greek myths she was placed in the sky as the constellation "*Virgo*," one of the constellations of the Zodiac. A folk-lore story of ancient Greece was that wine was invented by Erigone and her father Icarius, and that Erigone taught the rustics how to train and press the vine.

**Or.....gold,** Or as Erigone did in ancient Greece, she would stand in the vineyards, watching the vines being pressed into wine.

**Vineyards,** A plantation of grape-vines.

**L. 1150. Girt with gold,** (Qualifies "dame beloved" in line 1146), Decked out in her jewellery.

**To queen.....vintagers,** To play the part of a queen amongst the wine-pressers and grape-gatherers.

**To queen it,** Here "*queen*" is a verb=act like a queen; "*it*" is a sort of *cognate* object after "queen". The meaning is, "play the part of a queen", a great patroness of the lowly vintagers.

**Vintagers, Grape-gatherers ; wine-pressers.**

**Half.....hers,** The rude rustics almost adored the beautiful lady, like a sort of goddess, as she watched their operations. The sight of beauty produced this feeling of adoration among the country peasants. It was a homage they paid to beauty. They forgot their uncivilized manners, their brute force, in her presence. (Similarly the poet Spenser describes the beauty of his heroine Una producing the same feeling of adoration among the savage *satyrs*, a mythical race, half-man and half beast).

**Long.....agone,** Many years ago.

**Agone,** (Obsolete) Ago.

**Long.....passed,** That race of men had lived many, many years before the time of the present story.

**Their.....forgotten,** By this time, whatever evil actions they had done were forgotten.

**Or.....time,** Or they were jumbled together into the melting pot of time that alters everything.

**Crucible,** An earthen pot, for melting ores, metals, etc., by heating over a furnace.

**Glowing crucible,** A crucible which is heated red-hot over a fire.

**Glowing.....time,** *Metaphor*; time is compared to a heated melting hot, into which whatever you put it loses its original colour. Time brings every thing to the same dead level, levels every thing into an indistinguishable mass. (The meaning here is, whatever actions might have been done, good or evil, by the mysterious uncivilised race, who lived in the Kingdom, before the time of the King who figures here as the enemy of Michael, those actions could no longer be distinguished on account of the considerable lapse of time).

**That.....well,** That softens down every thing; mixes and reduces things to a uniform quality or standard.

**That.....pain,** Time converts pain into pleasure.

**And.....gain,** Turns misfortune into good fortune and loss into profit.

**Nathless,** Nevertheless.

**Unshaken still,** As strong as ever.

**Ramparts,** Fortification walls.

**Red as blood,** In blood-red brick word.

**Wherein.....away,** Within the fortified walls of which those ancient people had lived.

**About them,** Around them.

**Smiling..... ill,** (Personifying metaphor) Witnessing even now with a calm smile whatever was being done within their boundaries, both virtuous and vicious acts, as they had witnessed them for so many centuries in the past (i.e., they

were quite indifferent to the scenes that were being enacted within).

**Must.....awhile**, Had to go for a short time.

**In.....be**, In order to be at peace.

L. 1167. **Midst care**, In the midst of anxieties.

**Proud.....back**, Words of insult or defiance which the enemies of the King were forced to withdraw, (i. e. wars against insolent princes or nations).

**Half-healed broil**, Quarrels with neighbouring princes which were only half settled.

**Midst .. broil**, In the midst of various kinds of anxieties, doubts, political activities, wars, and treaties or political agreements.

**One meet to wed**, A person who was worthy enough to marry his daughter.

L. 1169. **Meet**, Fit; worthy.

**Goodlihead**, (Obsolete=goodlihood i. e. godlihood or godliness) Goodness; high character.

L. 1170-71. **Of.....royalty**, Adjectival phrases qualifying "one meet to wed etc." in l. 1169.

**Of unbroken royalty**, Who was descended without a break from royal ancestors, i. e. whose father, and fore-fathers had all been kings.

L. 1174. **That fair place**, The house referred to in lines 1143 *et seq.*

**Thou.....gone**, I shall visit you there within a month.

**To hold.....life**, To be my son-in-law; to whom I am going to give you in marriage, you who are so precious to me.

**Full.....wife**, He is very eager to see his bride.

**Full sore**, Intensely.

L. 1182. **Who.....heart**, (Qualifies "him" in l. 1181) Who has captivated many women (i. e. many women are in love with him; his beauty has made conquests of many female hearts).

**As.....fish**, (Simile) His beauty has made captives of female hearts, in the same manner as the fisher's nets entangle

the gleaming fish ; many women have been caught in the meshes of his love, as fish in the fisherman's net.

**Silvery, Bright ; gleaming.**

**And all.....thee, And I only pray to God that He may grant you the utmost of your wishes.**

**Not shamefaced, Without blushing.**

**Though.....thought, Though she thought that she did not stand in need of falling in love with any one, to complete her happiness ; she did not feel youthful love for anybody, nor did she think it necessary to her happiness.**

**Every.....beside, Every returning morning awakened her from her sleep for a fresh enjoyment of the joys of this life.**

**The.....bliss, The whole world lay open before her, spread out like a banquet of delight.**

**Her.....shame, She had not yet felt upon her lips the hot kisses of love, which put to flight early maidenhood's feelings of fear and modesty.**

**Conscious of no blame, Not having conscious knowledge of any guilt or impropriety.**

**Beheld.....men, Could gaze into any body's eyes without wincing or faltering (i. e. she had no reason to cast her eyes to the ground with feelings of shame).**

**Her.....hear, She did not faint with shame or fear at hearing anybody's foot-step (as a person in love often does).**

**Unused footstep, Unfamiliar footstep.**

**And unto.....queen, She did not inspire any feelings of passion in anybody, except that kind of homage or adoration which a man might feel for a goddess, if he lived in such society or times, as the early period of Greek history.**

**When Greek.....queen, In early Greek times, (especially in what is called the epic age of Greek history) many queens and princesses were deified (i. e. exalted to the dignity of goddesses) and adored.**

**Her armed folk, Her retinue of soldiers or men of her body-guard.**

**Unto.....abode, See l. 1143.**

1. 1206 to 1213. And while.....thoughts, She began her journey with the morning, while the lark was singing, but she thought not of love; she was journeying yet in the noon, but her thoughts were of ambition, not of love; the sun set and the evening came, while she was on her journey, yet it brought no thought of love or melancholy; the sun dawned again and she re-commenced her journey without a single painful thought: (Here the stages and time occupied by her journey are very pithily and beautifully described, viz.: dawn, noon, evening; night, and morning again; at no stage of the journey, did she allow any thoughts of love to disturb her peace and enjoyment. This is a very beautiful passage and should be carefully studied).

While the lark etc., The lark sings in the morning over the fields.

Love.....morning, No thoughts of love came to brighten the morning sunshine.

Waning morn, The mild morning light vanishes as the day grows bolder, hence the adjective, "waning", i.e., decreasing.

When.....above, When the sun climbed up the middle of the sky at noon.

High.....thought, (Cognate object) She thought of noble and ambitious things.

No love.....eve, There was no light of love to brighten the darkness of the evening.

Melancholy, The sad longings of a lover.

The dawn no vain, etc., The dawn brought no vain, etc.

Remorseful, Painful.

But all.....place, But without being troubled by the least thought of love or melancholy she completed her journey and entered the gate of that ancient mansion.

She abode, She waited for (past tense of *abide*).

Her bridegroom, The husband chosen for her by her father.



L. 1221. **From.....forest**, From the wilderness in which he lived on the other side of the forest.

**Bade him to enter**, We should say "*bade him enter*"" (the preposition *to* is not now used when the *infinitive* follows the verb "*bid*".)

L. 1223. **Well.....hear**, Having a great desire to hear. **Straightway**, Immediately.

**Sub-prior**, A monastery officer who assists the prior or abbot.

L. 1228. **Therewithal**, Along with them.

**Ten.....tall**, Ten persons of his retinue, who were tall and strong men.

**Armed.....fence**, Who carried sticks with iron blades (pikes) and were dressed in steel armour.

**Staves**, Pikes or halberts.

**Coats of fence**, Coats with iron plates fastened on to them (plate armour) or iron links (mail armour) for *defence* (fence=defence; that which acts as a fence or defence.)

**When he.....audience**, When he came to have a personal interview with the king. (*Audience* from Latin *audio*, I hear).

L. 1232. **He.....that**, He made to the king requests for many sorts of favours or concessions.

**Whereof.....forgot**, Requests or favours of which no account is given by the author from whom I have borrowed this story. (That is, requests, etc., which had nothing to do with the subject-matter of my story and are therefore not mentioned by my author).

**My story-teller**, The subject of this story is borrowed from a celebrated collection of tales in Latin, called the *Gesta Romanorum*.

**What may fall**, Whatever may fall; whatever may happen; at all events.

**Fair lord**, Bishops and abbots were church dignitaries and considered as *lords spiritual*, as opposed to the other peers, who were *lords temporal*.

**Thou goest not hence, etc.,** You must stay here for dinner.

**Unless.....pray,** Unless you choose to disrespect the wishes of your king. (The king invites him to stay for dinner).

**Axe-men,** Soldiers with pole-axes or halberts.

**While.....merrily,** While your soldiers will be fasting in another apartment.

**Eyed.....folk,** At the same time he carelessly surveyed the abbot's retinue.

**Tall.....rood,** I declare solemnly that you keep really tall and brave warriors in your service.

**By the rood,** (*Literally* = "by the cross of Jesus; I swear by the cross or the holy crucifix) I swear by the rood, i.e., the holy cross; I declare solemnly; by heaven, I say.

L. 1243. **Come they,** Do these men come from &c.?

**Dwell.....thereabouts,** Are many such tall men living there?

**Fain were I,** I should be very glad indeed if, etc.

L. 1245. **Such.....armed,** Such men should be in my army (when I put my army into motion), to raise my war-cry.

**Rank meets rank,** When the ranks of my soldiers dash against the ranks of my enemies.

**Wavering, Faltering;** shaking.

**Nor heard.....said,** Could not sufficiently control his senses to notice the whispered talk of the people in the hall or the reply of the monk to his words.

**For, looking.....saw,** These five lines describe the cause of his voice sinking and of his loss of control over his senses, viz., he saw and recognised Michael amongst the soldiers of the abbot's retinue.

**Steel-clad head,** A head protected with a steel helmet.

**Those eyes, etc.,** The eyes of Michael.

**Erst,** Formerly.

**'Neath the locks of gold,** From below his golden curling hair.

**Soft with awe**, (This refers to the expression of Michael's eyes when the king met him at the mill: it was then that his eyes were "soft with awe".) With a gentle expression arising from his timidity at meeting the king for the first time.

**L. 1255. Beneath.....bonghs**, The king met Michael on a day in autumn when the fruit were getting ripe in the orchard near the mill, see l. 571.

**When.....knew**, When he had full recognized Michael.

**Pale.....grew**, He became very pale, even his red lips became pale.

**Till.....within**, Gathering courage within his heart; reviving his courage in a short while.

**With.....smile**, Making an attempt to force a smile upon his features, or something like a smile.

**Faint.....smile**, Something which faintly resembled a smile; something which somewhat appeared like a smile.

**He.....not**, He made a pretence of taking notice of the abbot's word, which he had really not heard. (In his consternation at discovering Michael there, he had not been able to attend to the abbot's speech, but now he made a pretence of having understood what he said.)

**Facing**, Confronting; standing in front of.

**Methinks**, It seems to me (*Old* impersonal verb.)

**I know.....old**, I recognize your face from past experience.

**L. 1267. Steel cap's weight**, The heavy helmet of steel.

**Ruddy**, Of a red colour, the sign of high health.

**Sun-browned**, Sun-burnt by exposure.

**In a voice clear as a bell**, In a ringing voice.

**L. 1272. Sore**, Seriously; grievously.

**In that dismal vale**, The gloomy valley where Samuel had tried to murder him.

**What came after**, What followed after this.

**None knoweth better that he**, the sub-prior Adrian,  
The sub-prior Adrian knows the rest of the story best of all.

L. 1275. Who.....tide, ( Adjective clause to " *he*", to which the words, " *sub-prior Adrian*" are in apposition.) Saved me that day from a wicked death by murder.

That tide, That time ; on that day.

Made me man, Made a man of me i. e. educated me as a man should be.

L. 1278. Father, The king now calls upon Adrian to tell the story.

Making as if, Making a pretence of ; pretending to listen.

L. 1281. But, Only.

But a server.....walls, I who only did priestly service to poor men residing outside the walls of our monastery. (He was then an ordinary monk, not a sub-prior, as he was now.)

Abbey, A monastery and church under the charge of an abbot.

L. 1281. By one, By a person.

In poor array, Who was dressed in poor clothing.

A charcoal.....lad, The son of a charcoal burner.

L. 1286. Of all.....rights, Above all things he claimed to have the *rites* of the church performed.

That.....save, In order that his soul might have salvation.

L. 1288. Made no.....words, I did not delay, upon hearing this, but set out at once.

Took.....Lords, I took the Crucifix in my hands.

L. 1289. The Lord, An image of Jesus Christ upon the cross, used by the Catholic clergy at confessions and the rites of the church.

Bear forth the bell, ( It was the tinkling of this bell which Samuel had heard, see lines 1060, 1063, and 1088.) Carry the bell before me.—' This was a custom of the Roman Catholic clergy.'

L. 1291. Thou few.....way, Though there was very little likelihood of my meeting many people on the way and of their learning from me that I was going to save the soul of

a Christian upon his deathbed. (The tinkling of the bell would have announced to the passers-by that the priest was going on this sort of errand).

Nathless, Nevertheless.

L. 1292. I trow, (Obsolete) I trust.

L. 1293. The beasts.....know, I believe the beasts at least would be glad to know that a Christian soul was going to be saved. [There is a touch of *mystic feeling* here, viz., the beasts are represented as understanding and participating in the consolations of religion.]

Skirts, Borders ; boundaries.

By.....skirts, Along the borders of the pine-wood.

L. 1294. Through its twilights, Through the dim light within the pine-wood ("dim" light, i. e., on account of shade).

'Gan telling, etc., Began to tell me that he was afraid.

L. 1298. **Elves**, (Plural of *Elf*) Little spirits formerly believed to haunt woods and wild places ; faeries.

L. 1297. **Fears** he had.....wood, The fears of the country lad are a counterpart of the superstitious fear of Samuel, whose fear was intensified by his conscious knowledge of guilt.

Chid, (Past tense of *Chide*) Rebuked.

Thereat, At this ; upon this.

L. 1299. As was good, As it was quite proper to do.

L. 1300. Bidding.....held, I asked him to notice what I was holding in my hand, viz., the image of Jesus Christ that I was holding in my hand, in the presence of which all superstitious fears should fly away.

L. 1301. The Ransom.....lands, (Apposition to "Whom" in line 1300). Jesus Christ the redeemer of all mankind and all nations of men. (This refers to the central principle of Christianity that Jesus Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to redeem mankind from sin).

Firwood's.....twilight, The dim light in the grove of fir-trees (see note on line 1294).

Waxed into day, Became more strong.

**Fair and bright.....showed,** The evening sun shone brightly and beautifully through the trees (*i. e.*, when they had emerged from the trees and were nearing the valley. (In the same manner had Samuel and Michael emerged from the "fir-wood's gloom", line 1014, to the brighter sun-light, l. 1015).

**Showed,** (Intransive) Appeared.

L. 1302. **Firwood,** Grove of fir-trees; other names used in the text, *viz.*, *prine-wood* line 1294 and *spruce-tree wood*, line 993, are to be taken here as synonyms.

**Our ears.....heard,** We heard the sound of horse hoofs. (It was the sound of Samuel's galloping horse where he ran away in his fright.)

**My page,** My boy attendant (*viz.* the charcoal burner's lad.

**Hung back,** Fell back; refused to move on.

**Afeared,** (Obsolete) Afraid.

**Elves,** See note on l. 1298.

**Wilt.....him,** If you hang back, don't you see that your father would die before we can reach him? Would you like him to die thus?

**Wilt thou etc.,** Would you like that your father etc.

**Fear not,** Do not fear.

**That aught.....One,** That any thing in the world can stop Christ.

**This One,** The crucifix, *i. e.* the image of Christ in his hand. (The priest means to say that elves, fairies, goblins and such like things can do nothing to Christ or to a man in the presence of Christ.)

**Therewith,** Upon saying this.

**I smote my mule,** I beat my mule (in order to quicken his speed.)

L. 1312. **He ran forward,** *i. e.* The charcoal-burner's son ran forward.

**As fearing etc.,** Being afraid to be left behind by the monk.

What should we find ?, What do you think we found ?

This my son, Michael.

As though.....done, As if his life on earth was to be soon over ; as if he were about to die.

Wherefrom, From which.

Soaking, Drenching.

Water-mint, A kind of mint growing in wet places, and sometimes having a perfume resembling bergamot. (*Mint*, a name given to aromatic plants of several kinds such as corn-mint, pepper-mint, spear-mint etc. पुदीना.)

By dint..... strength, By exerting all our strength.

Dint. (Original meaning, a blow or stroke) Force ; power (usually found in the expression, " *by dint of* ").

The poor youth, Object to " *laid* ".

L. 1323. A glade.....hollies, An open passage between stems and branches of oak-trees and hollies.

The woodman, The charcoal-burner (see line 1284).

A poor hut, It was a poor hut, etc.

Built of.....wood, Bound with twigs or hurdles.

Wattle, A twig or flexible rod ; a hurdle.

Gable, The triangular part of an exterior wall of a building, between the top of the side walls and the slopes of the roof.

Ruinous shed, A ruined shed.

Unroofed, Roofless.

That.....shold, Which had once been a stable.

May know it well, You may know the place very well (he means to say, "you must have seen the place in your hunting excursions").

Since.....dwell, Since the wild boar is to be found there in large numbers ; since the place is a haunt of wild boars, deer etc.

Hart, hind, roe, Stags or deer, male or female, of various species.

Staunched, Stopped the blood flowing from the wounds [staunch or stanch, (pronounce *stansh*) means "to stop the

flowing of blood etc.”] (He bound the wounds and stopped them from flowing, he dressed the wounds).

L. 1333. **I.....care**, In those times the monks gave medical relief to the poor people in their neighbourhood, and many of them had an elementary knowledge of medicine.

**Forthwith**, Immediately.

**Then the man I shrived**, After attending upon the wounded boy first, I proceeded to confess the dying man.

**Shrived**, (This verb is almost obsolete) To receive a confession (The verb is used of a confessing priest: past tense shrove or shrived. It was the duty of the priest to receive the confession of the dying man, and so he did, but before that he attended upon the wounded boy, as his case was more critical).

**Who none.....day**, The sick man, who was supposed to be dying, however did recover and lived for many days thereafter.

**Our leech**, Our doctor. (This word is not used in modern English, except in a contemptuous or humorous manner. Another meaning of the word is “a blood-sucking worm” which the “leech” of Indian village society uses freely to relieve tainted or congested blood among his patients).

L. 1337. **I sent**, This shows that the wounded Michael was for the time being kept in the hut of the charcoal-burner and the doctor was sent to him next day.

**Drugs**, Medicine.

L. 1338. **To tend upon**, To attend upon; to treat.

**Before long**, In a short time.

**Latin he could etc.**, He was taught Latin in which he made much progress.

**Hath no.....still**, He has yet no desire to be a priest.

**Thereto**, In addition to that.

**Hale and strong**, Strong and stout. (*Hale*, obsolete, means healthy, stout).

**He.....voice**, He will do service to God with the strength of his body (i. e. by devoting the strength of his body to God, as a soldier) instead of preaching and praying like a priest.



**For their.....still,** In defence of them who feed him, *i.e.*,  
in defence of those men (*i. e.* the monks) who maintain him.

**Guard.....ill,** Who keep his soul free from sin.

**Fair-wrought,** Beautifully engraved.

**Deep in thy side,** Pierced deep in your side.

**Our tale.....nought,** That the king might feel sure that  
we are not telling him an imaginary story.

**Distraught,** Distracted ; confused.

**Leaning.....tale,** Sat leaning forward while this tale  
was being told.

**Scare etc ,** Scarcely seeming to note.

**At last.....changed,** When the whole story was told,  
he found himself speaking in a strangely altered voice.

**Fain,** With pleasure.

**Man-at-arms,** Soldier ; a soldier of the retinue.

**Seems true,** Seems a man of loyalty.

**What thing.....you,** What you will take to transfer his  
services to me.

**My rose,** The badge of a rose, borne by the servants of  
the king *i. e.* the emblem of a rose was shown on the livery  
dress of the King's retainers.

**Wear my rose,** Be dressed in my retinue (the " rose "   
being here used as a figure of speech, called Metonymy, the  
*sign* of a thing for the name of the thing itself or *Synecdoche*,  
a *part* of the dress being used for the whole); join my retinue,  
take service with me as a member of my retinue.

**Better.....rose,** It *would be better* for him to join my  
retinue. (In those days the members of the retinue of a noble-  
man, and especially of that of a king, wore special uniforms  
or liveries, bearing the badges or emblems that were the distin-  
guishing marks of the family of their patron.

**L. 1369. Close,** An enclosed place or field.

**Abbey-close,** The enclosed grounds of the abbey ; the  
enclosed land around the abbey.

**Loiter.....close,** Spend his days idly within the narrow  
limits of your abbey.

**Poring over**, Reading or studying with attention.

L. 1370. **Read**, The object is *which* understood.

**My.....fairness**, It is not necessary for the soldiers of my retinue to be so handsome; I have no particular need of handsome men like Michael to be in my service.

**Nor should.....this**, It is proper that ladies should not lose the advantage of the society of such a handsome man as Michael. The point of the sentence lies in the fact that ladies were denied social intercourse with the inmates of a monastery. If Michael were to spend all the days in a monastery, ladies would have no occasion to see him and they would lose the society of a man who was as handsome as he was brave.

L. 1375. **As thou sayest**, The king however never made any such remark, as is here attributed to him by the Abbot.

**Pucker**, To gather into folds; to wrinkle.

**The king.....smile**, (*Nominative absolute*) While the king puckered his lips into a smile (*i. e.*, was twisting the muscles of his face into a smile).

L. 1379. **As.....dream**, As in a confused scene which one may see in a dream.

**Same steel.....well**, The knife which he remembered so well to have given to Samuel.

**Drawn.....chest**, Which he had taken out from an old chest of his father.

**Behest**, Command.

**To do.....behest**, He had given it that day to Samuel to carry out his cruel order.

**Sheen**, Brightness.

L. 1385-87. **Twining stem.....back!** See notes on lines 758 to 762.

L. 1384. **Beheld**, The objects of this verb are *sheen*, *stem*, and *scroll*.

L. 1389. **Grown.....sight**, Feeling as wretched as when he had last seen Michael near the mill.

**Now.....light,** Whom he saw now for the third time  
(viz. first at the peasant's cottage as a new-born baby, then as  
a boy at the mill, and lastly now in the abbot's retinue).

**Come to light, Seen.**

**Fell, (Adjective) Cruel.**

**L. 1392. Once more was etc., Once more became &c.**

**Clad.....array, Dressed in a brilliant uniform.**

**Became.....man, Became a member of the king's guard  
or retinue.**

**Most.....estate, Very lucky to be appointed to such a  
high place, with all its brilliant prospects.**

**Estate, Position; dignity; status.**

**Which past, (Nomin. Absolute) When these ten days  
were past.**

**For.....send, Called Michael to his presence.**

**Unto.....land, To the southern part of my Kingdom.**

**About noon-tide, About noon.**

**If thou dost well, If you ride properly; unless you loiter  
on the way.**

**My Castle of the Rose, See lines 1143—45 and 1160—64  
for a description of this castle.**

**Needs it is, It is necessary. (Needs is an adverb).**

**Should see this, Should see this letter.**

**Until that, Until. (The word *that* is a mark of an  
obsolete style. It is redundant if the sentence is expressed in  
modern English.**

**Within my wall, Within the walls of my castle.**

**Seneschal, Steward or principal officer in management of  
a great house.**

**Wary, Cautious; careful.**

**That thou.....estate, Act in such a manner as to think  
that upon the faithful execution of this duty would depend  
your higher prospects, i.e., remember that if you carry out this  
duty faithfully, you will rise to further honour and greatness.**

**Birthday.....estate,** (Metaphor) *Literally* the carrying out of the present duty *will give birth* to all your future greatness.

**Knowing.....he,** He did not know that fate was arranging the future of the young Michael in quite a different way from what he intended. The king was proposing to send Michael to meet his death, and fate provided that he should become his son-in-law and heir to his Kingdom. The student will remember the oft-quoted proverb, "*Man proposes, God disposes*".

**Who.....lack,** Who possessed every quality except that of speaking or conversing with his companion. He was a rude, blunt soldier, a man of few words. He was thus a very unsociable companion on a journey.

**Daylong,** (Obsolete) For the whole day.

**From the north,** From north to south.

**Some.....Samuel,** Attempt to murder Michael as Samuel had done.

**Certes,** To be sure; certainly.

**L. 1426—29. Certes.....war,** The King might have *hoped* that he would kill Michael on the way, but at any rate he had not told him to do so in definite terms, because Hugh never thought of treacherous deeds. He only thought of war and warlike deeds.

**L. 1430. Had there been,** There would have been.

**Yet.....tell,** Yet it is just possible that a story of blood and horror would have to be told; it is possible that Hugh might have quarrelled with Michael and killed him.

**If.....well,** If Michael had not behaved very quietly with him.

**Held him well,** Held himself well, *i.e.*, conducted himself well.

**L. 1432—33. Backward.....said,** Hugh used insulting language towards Michael, but the latter constantly endeavoured to restrain his anger.

**Still, Constantly.**

**Wherewith.....burned,** Though he felt the insults very much; though the insults caused him much anger and heart-burning. (However Michael remained patient).

**Crossways,** A place where two roads cross one another.

**Whereat, At which; upon which.**

**Feathered hat,** A hat adorned with plumes.

**Bowed.....scorn,** Made a contemptuous bow.

**Spur, Ride.**

**Unto.....spur,** I must ride towards the west.

**Soon.....coronet,** He said that Michael was so go to the west and added sarcastically he was going to be made an earl.

**Yet.....hard,** Mind, you don't stare hard at the princess.

**Lest.....throat,** For were you to do so, you would find yourself thrown into the ditch or hanged for your impertinence. (These words are an example of the insulting language that had tried the patience of Michael).

**Plumb the moat,** Be cast like lead into the moat.

**Plumb,** To sound the depth of water by means of a plumb-line, i.e., a string with a heavy leaden weight at the end. Here the meaning is "to be tossed into the moat like a plummet or plumb-line".

**Moat,** A trench round a fort or castle, filled with water, being a part of the plan of fortification.

**Halter, Rope** (suggests *hanging*).

**Scoff,** Jeer; insult.

**Michael.....nought,** Michael made no reply to this last insult.

**Upon.....though,** Began to think of his ambitious prospects.

**Hooves,** (Obsolete form) Hoofs.

**As.....heard,** As he heard the hoofs of Hugh's horse on his departure.

**Betwixt.....spurred,** Continued to ride between the hedge-rows.

**Hedgerow,** A row of trees or shrubs for hedging fields.

**When.....overpast, When night had set in.**

**O'erpast, Over; past.**

**Drew rein, Stopped his horse.**

**As such folk can, As a tired rider like him could sleep.**

**While.....course, Early in the morning when the thrushes had begun their first song.**

**L. 1454-55. Throgh.....through, He started on his journey riding through the morning frost caused by the autumn dew.**

**Gossamers, Hoar-frost, i.e., frost caused by the frozen dew, and having some resemblance to a thin-spun gossamer-like web. "Gossamer" properly means very fine spider-threads which float in the air or form webs on bushes in fine weather.**

**The live-long-day, All through the day.**

**L. 1460. Hinds, Peasants; farm-labourers.**

**Yeomen, Small farmer proprietors; men of small estates or agricultural holdings.**

**Of the heavy hood, With their heads covered with hoods.**

**White-coifed, Wearing white caps.' (It was the custom of middle class married women to wear such white caps).**

**Housewives, Married women.**

**Maunds, Baskets.**

**Damsels, Girls; unmarried women.**

**Well-shod, Wearing pretty shoes.**

**Trudged along, Travelled on foot. 'Trudge' implies 'labour' or 'pain' in walking.**

**A song.....bird's, A song as simple and natural as that of a bird.**

**Sending forth, Singing.**

**L. 1467-69. And goodmen.....end, And the good yeomen whom he met on the way, as well as the married women and priests, and the girls and even the flocks themselves, greeted him on the way wishing a happy end to his journey.**

**Failed.....send,** Did not omit to greet him heartily.

**Athwart.....sped,** They greeted him across the way as he went on riding fast.

L. 1471. **Free.....dread,** (Adjectival phrase qualifying "he" in l. 1470) As he had no fear whatever nor any wicked or melancholy thoughts.

**Withal again,** Again in the same manner.

**Hostelry, Inn** (The word *hotel* is ultimately from the same root as *hostel*).

**Leaving.....street,** Leaving the street at a time when the people in the houses on either side had scarcely awaked.

**The newly.....heart,** He welcomed the morning sun, newly risen, with a joyful heart.

**His way wound.....up,** His way went winding in a zig-zag course up a hill.

**A great.....brow,** The summit of a mountain made up of chalk-stone rocks.

**Whence.....back,** Looking back from the summit upon the prospect below.

**Square,** Open spaces or quadrangles, in a city enclosed by houses.

**Baily,** A suburb outside the gate of a walled town.

**Crawling up.....hill,** As he ascended slowly the long slope of the hill which was dotted with yew-trees.

L. 1486. **Seeming.....it,** (Qualifies "*doves*") As if the morning air gave them fresh vigour.

**The early fires,** The fires from the kitchens etc., in the town.

**That.....delight,** The smoke from kitchen fires told him that the merry people of the town were just awakened to spend a day of great enjoyment.

L. 1423-95. **He seemed.....hate,** He seemed to himself to have been born again, not as a common man, but as one of the immortal gods (of the ancient mythologies), free from all the human passions of envy, fear, and hatred, and capable of feeling joy alone. (According to the ancient Greek idea the

gods were above all painful feelings and passions, and were embodiments of perfect joy and beauty; besides being immortal; many of them were believed to enjoy a perpetual youth).

L. 1492—95. **So joyous.....hate**, This feeling of joy is a happy augury or indication of that joyful state to which he was soon destined to come by marrying the King's daughter.

**Tableland**, An extensive flat of elevated land like a table; a plateau.

**Windy, Stormy**; exposed to constant wind.

**Barren.....grain**, Not producing any crop; there were no cultivated fields there.

L. 1499. **Where.....of it**, Only wherever there was a hollow depression in the plateau, the yew-trees were found growing on the sides of the slope.

**Specked, Dotted**.

**Where.....specked**, Here and there depressions were found dotting the plain.

**Hugged, Clung fast to**; grew upon.

**Mid them**, In the midst of the yew-trees.

**Woodlark**, A species of lark found in or near the woods, singing chiefly on the wing. (The larks were not found generally flying over the tableland, which was barren, but only in its hollow parts where the trees were growing).

**Sheltered.....wind**, Sheltered from the wind by the branches of the yew-trees.

**Sheep.....grass**, Sheep and grass were also to be found only near the hollows, which retained the rain-water and allowed the grass to grow for the sheep to graze upon.

**The while, etc.**, At the same time while his sheep were grazing the shepherd was singing his song in clear accents, as Michael was hurrying on his way.

L. 1508—10. **From out a hollow, etc.**, He emerged from a hollow or sunken part of a land which under the cooling shade of its yew-trees still preserved here and there some of the dew that had fallen in the night.



**Won, Reached.**

**Highland's edge,** The boundary of the plateau, the other edge of the plateau.

**Gazed upon, etc.,** He found a valley stretching below.

**Haze, Vapours** rendering the air thick. .

**Showed glorious, (Intransitive)** Appeared lovely.

L. 1514—26. **Fair.....end,** This is a beautiful example of scene painting, or description of a landscape.

**Golden sheaves,** The valley appeared beautiful with fields full of golden sheaves of corn.

**Fair, rich, gay, etc.,** These adjectives in lines 1514, 15 and 16 qualify "*valley*" in line 1512.

**Darkened, etc.,** Dark green leaves of autumn.

**Water-meadows, etc ,** Meadows near the river side overgrown with beautiful grass.

**The bright blue streams,** *Gay with* the shining blue rivulets that flowed between the meadows.

**The miles of beauty, etc.,** *Gay with* the miles of beauty, etc.

L. 1518—19. **The miles.....grey,** The beautiful country that stretched for miles from the cold rocky hill upon which he was standing.

L. 1520—21. **Till.....lines,** The beautiful county stretched upto a point where white mountain tops were seen on the horizon, rising above their vine-grown slopes, and where the ridge of their peaks formed a broken irregular line against the back-ground of the sky.

**Gilded.....gleam,** Saw golden turrets shining.

**Spirelets,** Little spires ; turrets.

**Hedged .....close,** Fenced round with flowering gardens and parks.

**Close,** See note on line 1369.

**His.....end,** Which was the goal of a rapid journey.

**Downward,** Down the slope of the hill into the valley.

**To wend,** To go ; to ride.

**Hook,** An instrument for cutting grain.

**Heard.....wheat,** Heard the farmers carrying on their reaping.

**Murmut.....folk,** Confused voices of the peasant people below who were yet shut off from his view.

**Broke the golden plain,** Divided the golden fields on its two banks.

**But leisurely,** Only in a leisurely manner.

**The masters.....realm,** The peasant owners of the ripening fields.

**Cast down beneath,** Lying or reposing under.

**From hand.....pass,** They were drinking and passing the wine-jar from one person to another. (They had done their work and were resting and refreshing themselves).

**Ashen-handled sickles,** Sickles with handles of stout ash-wood.

**The matters.....between,** (The matters, etc., *lay* between), Their food and refreshments lay between them as they sat under the old elm-tree.

L. 1541—1546. **Slices.....gable-end,** These lines are in apposition to "*matters of their cheer*" in line 1540, viz., slices of cheese, onions, ryebread, summer apples, and yellow grapes.

**Specked with,** Dotted with.

**Ryebread,** Bread made of rye, which is a kind of barley.

**Plucked from,** Plucked from vines creeping along the sloping side-walls of the cottage roof. (The student should observe the effect of diversity of colours described in the various articles, producing a *sense of vividness*, viz., sliced cheese, *white* and specked with *green*, onions which were *green-striped*, apples, showing a *faint red* even under their *crimson* skin and *yellow* grapes).

**Certes.....voices,** Certainly Michael felt a social sympathy with these jolly people.

L. 1548—50. **Nor.....stream,** He remembered the experiences of his boy-hood and the jolly time he had passed on the river-side beside his foster-father's mill.

**This water,** This stream.

**Bearing.....man,** Full of wholesome food, fish and water-plants, delightful to man and beast.

**Yea, Yes.**

**Parapet,** A rampart breast-high ; a breast-high wall on a bridge. (He was passing along the bridge).

**Greeting.....cast,** Greeted him warmly.

**Harvest wain,** Waggon for carrying the crops or harvest after reaping.

**As.....stream,** He felt himself to be a boy again, when he used to sleep beneath the waggon loaded with harvest by the river-side, near the mill.

**And.....dream,** As though all the later events which had passed, after leaving the mill, were a mere dream ; these later events passed before his mind like a mere dream.

**L. 1560-71. The King.....way,** This is a long series of words in *apposition* to "*dream*" in l. 1559. The nouns in *apposition* are:—King, Squire, ride, pain, swoon, life, tending, Dominican, hour, poring, King, greetings, horse, array, and journey.

**The King,** This refers to the King's visit to the mill.

**The Squire,** The visit of Samuel to take him away from the mill.

**The hurrying.....side,** The rapid ride with Samuel to the lonely bog. (See l. 1025, 26).

**Quagmire,** Boggy ground.

**Pain,** The pain arising from the sudden wound.

**Swoon,** The fainting that followed the wound.

**Feverish life etc.,** The fever that lasted from day to day.

**Tending,** Medical help and nursing.

**The kind old man,** This probably refers to the leech. (See l. 1337).

**The black.....Dominican,** This refers probably to the sub-prior, Father Adrian, who had really saved him. (*Black and white*, dressed in a black cloak upon a white robe and hood. See note on l. 937).

**The hour.....throne,** The time when he being recovered was first presented to the Abbot.

**The poring.....morns,** Patient study of old books in his lonely cell on summer mornings.

**The King again,** The second meeting with the king, at his palace.

**The envious.....men,** The fact that his sudden rise in the King's favour, as it seemed to the courtiers, called in them a feeling of jealousy against Michael, who was but a stranger to them.

**This mighty horse,** The mission on which he went riding that magnificent horse.

L. 1570. **Rich array,** His splendid dress.

**On an unknown way,** This journey to a part of the country which he did not know at all.

**Surely.....sit,** As these thoughts passed in his mind he thought them to be all dreams and his old country life to be a reality, and under this persuasion he was almost on the point of creeping up to a harvest waggon and sitting down by its side, as he had been accustomed to do in his boyhood.

**Blinking.....mill,** Gazing with eyes half blinded by the sunlight upon his father's mill bathed in dazzling sunshine, as he had so often done in his boyhood.

**But.....days,** But alas! those days of his past life, whether they were happy or unhappy, were now passed by, never to return; not even one of those old days would ever return to him.

**Either for good or ill,** He shall taste neither the joys nor the sorrows of those old days.

**Through.....haze,** Through the vapours changing with the mid-day sun.

**Wind-beat,** Exposed to the wind.

**Draw-bridge,** A bridge swung upon a pivot for crossing the moat.

**Gold-scaled fishes,** Fishes with scales shining like gold.

**Such peate see,** For the castle had been in a peaceful condition for a long time. (The lilies, gold-fishes, and the bridge let down are signs of the peaceful condition. In war time the bridge would be drawn up, so as to prevent the enemy from approaching the castle).

**Within.....shade,** Under the shaded arch of the gate-way.

**Warder,** Sentinel keeping watch at the gate. (He was however sleeping,—another sign of the reigning peace).

**On.....aid,** Was lying asleep on his mantle; he had spread out his mantle to sleep upon.

**L. 1590-95. One hand .....cane,** Just before falling asleep he had been amusing himself with playing on the harp and before that with angling with the rod the freshwater fish in the moat.

**One hand,** *With one hand, or nominative absolute, one hand being on the harp.*

**Harp,** A triangular musical instrument with strings played by the fingers.

**Carp,** A fresh-water fish.

**Lay still,** Lay still in death; dead and stiff.

**With all.....done,** (Euphemism) The carp had come to the end of the sorrows of this life, *i. e.* was dead and insensible to life's pains and sorrows.

**Drawn from the moat,** Having been dragged with the fishing-line out of the moat-water.

**Ere yet.....high,** Before the sun had risen high up in the sky, *i. e.*, in the early morning or fore-noon.

**Nigh him,** Near the fish.

**His bane,** The cause of his death; the instrument of his destruction.

**Rod,** In apposition to "bane."

**Horse-hooves,** Horse-hoofs.

**Smite the causeway,** Striking upon the stone pathway.

**Causeway,** A pathway raised and paved with stone.

**L. 1597. Shading etc.,** Qualifies "he" in l. 1599.

L. 1599. **He**, The warder (who had been sleeping and has now awaked).

**Made.....take**, Managed to snatch up his spear.

**Eyeing.....while**, Meanwhile observing the royal badge upon the King's uniform which Michael was wearing (i.e., noticing that he was a servant of the King).

**Abide**, Stop; wait.

**Show.....home**, Tell me why you have come here where the princess royal lives.

**Letters.....Seneschal**, I am the bearer of letters from the King addressed to the Lord Steward of the Castle (see line 1413).

**Certes.....care, etc.**, Work and trouble come quickly; joy does not approach so fast, and therefore the Steward won't care to look at the letters till his dinner is over.

**To aught.....heed**, Pay attention to any business.

**Till.....away**, Till the whole entertainment is over and the invited guests have returned home.

**Damoiseau**, Young man of noble birth, literally *young lord or master*, the word is a later Latin *diminutive* from (*dominicellus*, a little lord) of the classical Latin noun, *dominus*, which means a lord or master, the word *damsel*, a young lady, is the feminine form of the same word (late Latin *dominicella*). The word *damoiseau* is obsolete.

**Anigh the gate**, Near the gate.

**Thou.....bier**, I shall sing and play to you the song, called "the Kaiser lieth on his bier".

**Kaiser**, (Obsolete) King or emperor from the Latin *Caesar*, the name of Julius Caesar, the Great Roman Commander. The Roman emperors used this name as a part of their title, whence the proper noun passed into current use with the meaning of emperor. The title of the *ex*-emperors of Russia—the Ozar—and that of the *ex*-German emperor—the Kaiser—is derived from the same name, *Caesar*).

**Bier**, A carriage or frame of wood for bearing the dead to the grave.

Lieth on his bier, Is dead.

The Kaiser, etc., The title of the song chosen by the warder has a mystical appropriateness. The old King's power is about to pass away. The King Michael is to be acknowledged as the King's son-in-law and heir. The poet makes the warder unconsciously utter words which have a mystical or supernatural significance as regards the final event of the story.

Valorous, (Almost obsolete except in poetry and elevated prose style), Valiant.

Red Beard, Nickname of Frederick I, Holy Roman emperor, of the Hohenstaufen family, 1155—1190, who among his other exploits took part in the Crusades and fought against Saladin. He was called Barbarossa or Red Beard. The patriotic aspirations of the German people clung to his memory, and many legends and songs concerning him were handed down to posterity. He is said to have been drowned in Cilicia, south-west of Asia Minor during the third Crusade. But one of these patriotic traditions represents him as being still asleep somewhere in Thuringia, from which place he may return to succour Germany in her hour of greatest need. However he did not awake to run to the rescue of Germany, when Marshal Foch and Sir John Haigh with the allied army brought Germany to her knees in the Great European war of our times !

L. 1620. Hast thou.....died ?, The warder's song apparently was an old ballad celebrating the death of Red Beard.

I can.....forget, I can sing many other pretty songs which you will not forget for a long time.

Budget, Bag.

The budget.....yet, My stock of songs is not yet come to an end.

Peter !, An exclamation, by St. Peter, I say !

Perdie, (Lat. *per deum*, by God !), By heaven ; assuredly.

**Fair perdie**, By heaven I declare you are a handsome young man ; assuredly you look a handsome fellow.

**L. 1628-30.** Thou...here, Well, you may go and take the air in the lady Bertha's garden.

**Pleasance**, (Obsolete) Garden.

**Lief**, (Obsolete, Anglo-Saxon, *Leof*=dear), Beloved ; dear.

**She who.....soul**, See lines 1145 to 1152. The lady Bertha is the woman referred to in lines 1145 to 1152. She was the mistress of an ancient King, who had built the castle and gardens especially for amusement. Hence the warder calls the garden, " Dame Bertha's pleasance ". *Dame* means " Lady ".

**Was held**, Was regarded as.

**All.....ache**, An ancient king had erected all this park and castle for that lady whose beauty excited love in so many persons.

**Full of years and shame**, Dying an old woman, grown gray in her infamous life as a harlot.

**Yet left.....name**, Is still remembered in the name of this garden.

**God.....soul !**, May God give her rest in heaven.

**The while**, During this time ; meanwhile ; while the warder was speaking.

**Hearkened**, (Same root as "*hark*") Listened to.

**I think.....depart**, Before my departure I hope I shall be able to hear the song " the king lieth, etc. ", and many others of your songs. (He spoke very courteously to the warder).

**Now show me, etc.**, For the present, however, show me the way to Bertha's garden.

**Paradise**, Properly means the garden of Eden, where according to the Bible Story, Adam and Eve were first placed by God, at the creation of man, and where they lived till Eve disobeyed God's command and was tempted by Satan to eat of the " forbidden fruit ". Hence any delightful place, which appears like Heaven itself to the fond imagination of man.



**These red.....lies,** It seems to me that these red towers enclose the way into a blissful place like Paradise.

**L. 1646. That may.....thee,** You may call it a Paradise if you know what is going to happen to you there. (These words of the warder have also a mystical meaning because a wonderful change took place in his destiny after his going there; otherwise the story of his life would have ended in a tragedy. The garden really proved a Paradise—a place of life—to him) as will be seen from what follows.

**L. 1648. Past,** Beyond.

**Court,** Court-yard; open space generally in front of a house; an enclosed space.

**That folk.....path,** Which people now-a-days call the path of the falconer.

**Falconer,** One who sports with, or who breeds and trains falcons or hawks for taking wild-fowl.

**To find ...for.** To find the Paradise you are in search of.

**Wicket gilded fair,** Pretty gilt gate.

**Wicket,** A small gate.

**Where.....be,** Where you *wish* to go. (Here *wouldst* is past tense of *will* in the sense of *wish*).

**Wouldst be,** Wish to be; would wish to be, *i.e.*, to go.

**Well fed,** After a full dinner.

**Whene'er,** As soon as.

**L. 1661. Won,** Reached.

**Wary feet, etc.,** Contiously.

**With open mouth,** In great surprise at the beauty and magnificence that met his eyes.

**L. 1664—66. As though.....day,** He felt that he was dreaming and in his dream found himself in some fairy land, and feared that if he were to awake, the fairy land of his dream would vanish away and leave him to the usual dull and matter-of-fact world. He felt what he saw was a dream, because it was so beautiful, but in reality what he saw was not a dream, but a plain matter of fact.

**L. 1667 Decay.....loveliness,** Even the effect of decay itself was to make the place appear more lovely, though it gave it a kind of melancholy tone (or character).

**Pensive, Melancholy.**

**Where.....fruit,** It was a place which the autumn loaded with a rich abundance of fruit; the trees growing along the old walls had an abundance of fruit.

**Unscared,** Without being frightened off.

**Through.....pass,** The thrushes flitted up and down through the grasses without any fear.

**Spring-born,** Which had been born in the last spring.

**Who yet.....tide,** And which as yet had no fear of the coming winter's cold.

**Fountain,** An artificial fountain, such as is often found in a garden, sending up a jet of water.

**Basin,** The basin of the fountain; the hollow place to receive the water from the jet.

**Remembered.....old,** Remembered from the old days of his boyhood at the mill.

**Ere yet.....gold,** Before the miller had received the gold presented to him by the king and parted company with Michael. (See lines 868—70).

**Soon.....ground,** Soon feeling himself drowsy on account of his hard ride, the heated atmosphere of an autumn noon, and the singing of birds, he lay down on the ground.

**Watched.....leap,** Saw how the water in the fountain was falling in little jets or cascades.

**Still.....sleep,** He kept humming a song to himself and did not propose to sleep.

**L. 1684-88 But scarce.....seen,** But within three minutes he had fallen fast asleep, and the starlings and other birds twittered over him just as if they wanted to mock him, and yet he saw and remembered nothing, nor was he dreaming about any thing he had seen,—so fast asleep he now was.

**Held right dear,** Loved very affectionately.

Right dear, Very dear.

Knew.....mind, Who was in her entire confidence and knew all her thoughts and secrets.

Those twain, These two ladies.

As the warm.. ...running, They had been running, by turns pursuing one another, and while they did so the warm mid-day air, filled with the smell of flowers, played about their dresses or hair, causing them them to flutter.

As the warm etc., While the warm etc.

As maids do etc., As it is the custom of young maidens to romp, when they think they are alone.

Well.....therewithal, Being now quite tired with their sport.

Had let.... feet, Had allowed their dresses to trail down on their feet, which they had tucked up (folded up) while they were running and chasing one another.

Slowly went, They were now walking slowly in the garden.

L. 1701-3 Through the leaves.....spring, They were talking so softly, that their voices passed like a murmur among the leaves, like the cooing of a pair of happy turtle-doves when with their songs they greet the returning spring.

Spoke.....seldom, She talked less, but laughed oftener, than her companion.

Redden etc., Would often blush.

As on.....laid, Putting her finger on her lips as a gentle sign to her companion not to say such silly or immodest things.

Still, Constantly ; continually.

L. 1709 Half.....said, Went on with her idle or immodest prattle, sometimes in a serious, sometimes in a mirthful style.

In the midst, In the middle.

Whereby, Near which.

Dreaming.....brought, Not dreaming at all of the happiness that was approaching him in the person of these maidens.

**Fountain shaft**, The jet of water sent up by the fountain.

**On the ground down-cast**, Lying down on the ground.

**Lightly**, Noiselessly.

**To the shade**, The shade under which Michael was sleeping.

**A smile.....lips**, (Nomin. Absolute.) With her lips opened into a smile.

**Parting**, Dividing; opening.

**Afire**, Glowing; sparkling.

**Her bright.....phantasies**, (Nomin. Absolute) Her eyes were sparkling brilliantly with a strange light kindled by her wild and romantic thoughts.

**Fantasies**, (From Greek *phantasia*, from which also comes the more common form "fancy"). Wild and romantic thoughts, dreams, or visions.

L. 1716-21 **Until the maid.....fantasies**, The companion of the princess went forward to gaze at the sleeping Michael and came back with a smile and glowing with her romantic thoughts.

**Did I not.....here?**; I'll remind you that I had foretold beforehand that the person you are to marry would come here to make his love addresses to you in this quiet place, before being introduced to you directly by your father as the son-in-law of his choice. (See lines 1169-70).

**He**, The unknown lover or husband; the expected bridegroom.

**Woo thee**, Court your love; make love addresses to you, his expected bride.

**Come.....fear!**, Come and see your expected husband, without any fear, because he is sound asleep.

L. 1727-28 **The great.....ears**, He is so fast asleep that even if the great bell of the castle were rung in his ear he would not awake.

**I a maid.....die**, I would but willingly live and die a virgin. (i. e. I shall marry in obedience to my father, but if left to my own choice I would die a maiden.)

**For such.....Paradise, tec.,** So far as the men go whom you have seen up to now, your resolution to live and die a maiden is all right. But this man seems to have come direct from Paradise.

**By my head, Upon my life.**

**This.....Paradise,** He seems no ordinary man, he seems to have come straight from Paradise, so beautiful is he.

**Ere aught.....again,** Before any cause makes him get away.

**Kindly thought, Thought of love.**

**To Cecily's.....brow,** Brought a blush upon the princess's face.

**Quickly.....beat,** Her heart began to beat quickly with her eagerness.

**As love.....greet,** Prose order : "as love drew near to greet those eyes" i. e. as her eyes became filled with a feeling of love.

**Who.....how,** She who did not know Michael till that time. (The antecedent of "*who*" is "*she*" understood or to be borrowed in sense from "*those eyes*".

**Lovely.....eyes,** A mingled feeling of love and modesty seemed to blind her eyes.

**Full.....fantasies,** Which were taken up with many romantic ideas or suggestions.

**Her mate, Her destined husband.** (She took him to be the person whom her father had selected, as he had told her, to be her husband- (See lines 1169—70).

**Love begin.....tale,** Love seemed to sway her heart; love seemed to triumph over her heart.

**That was her own,** A man whom she actually believed to be her destined husband of her father's choice.

**Whom midst.....behold,** She had however thought that she would see him first in the midst of his glorious arms and magnificence.

**Fear.....go,** Then arose a sense of fear, her love persuading her to stay, her fear to depart; and thus there was a strife of feelings, as she turned to go.

**Her merry fellow, Her merry companion ; the maiden**  
 who accompanied her.

**Shamefaced, Coyly ; with modest blushes.**

**She met.....surprise, She found the maiden's eyes**  
 turned suddenly grave, apparently on account of a painful  
 discovery.

**Who, For she (i.e., for the maiden).**

**Mazed, Amazed ; embarrassed with her love.**

**Loosened band, Loosened girdle. (It was a common**  
 thing to carry money, etc., in pouches hidden at the girdle).

**Scroll, Letter.**

**Do.....with, Do what you wish, for there is no time to**  
 lose.

**Sad.....spilt, It is sad to think that such a handsome**  
 young man should be put to death.

**On thee.....fall, (As in old letters, the king begins with**  
 a blessing) **May all choicest blessings be pouered on you and**  
 your family.

**Hereby, etc., Hereby the king sends you his greetings.**

**L. 1782. His.....this, The bearer of this letter, who is**  
 the King's enemy.

**And as thou.... set thou, etc., If you prize your own**  
 life, property, and happiness, you must put up his head on a  
 spear, and let it remain there till the king's arrival. (The  
 heads of political enemies after execution were thus sometimes  
 displayed by their revengeful enemies in the barbarous times  
 of the Middle Ages).

**So perish.....enemies, As a sign and warning to all**  
 that the king's enemies are thus to be treated.

**Clear, Clearly.**

**Name, Signature.**

**Ere.....feel, Before she felt the force of love in all its**  
 violence.

**Drew her back, Brought her back.**

**To him.....agone, To Michael whose very name she did**  
 not know an hour ago.

**Agone**, (Obsolete) Ago.

**Panting**.....said, With a palpitating breast she said to her companion.

**If of**.....snare, In case he should wake up before my return, arrange to hide him after telling him about the danger in which he is.

**The snare**, The treacherous death at the order of the King. (Metaphor).

L. 1802. **Death**.....fall, Death is the smallest punishment you have to expect from my displeasure, i.e., you will suffer something worse than death.

**What say I ?**, (She corrects herself) What is it I am saying to you?

**Thou**.....I, You will have the power and authority of a queen, even more than I; I shall see that your word is better obeyed than mine.

**Few words** are best, be wise!, Compare the proverb, "a word to the wise". This proverb is derived from Latin.

**As a man**, As though she were not a woman, but a man.

**Her own**.....last, Nominative absolute.

**Bower**, (Obsolete in this sense), A lady's chamber or apartment.

**Hurrying**..... meat, Making haste as it was time for the Steward's guests to leave the dining hall.

**Meat**, Dinner.

**A royal**.....sealed, etc, A paper already signed and sealed by the King, but otherwise blank.

**With a**.....tremble, With a firm and steady hand; with a hand made firm by her resolution.

**Writ**, .....skill, Written like a scholar.

**Clerkly skill**, As a cleverly as a scholar (*Clerkly* is obsolete, in the meaning of "like a scholar").

**Unto**.....health!, We offer our greetings and wish for the good health of, etc.

**Moved**, Induced.

L. 1832. **Our son**, Our son-in-law.

**Wed.....this,** Marry the two, my daughter and him, on the very day you receive this letter.

**Oath, i.e.,** Oath of loyalty and obedience as the heir to the throne.

**Lief, Beloved ; dear** (Obsolete).

**So.....be,** By doing this deed you will continue to be a dear friend of mine, as I have considered you to be all these days.

**What.....drink, etc.,** What bitter sorrow she would have to endure if she now failed in the task she had attempted.

**Potion, Bitter medicine ; poison.** (Here the word is used metaphorically).

**So falsely bold,** (Qualifies "she") Acting boldly her false or deceitful part.

**That life.....cover,** Knowing that what she was doing was a matter of life or death.

**Within its cover,** Within the cover of the King's letter.  
**Enfold, Wrap.**

**Making shift to, Contriving somehow to.**

**A signet, A seal.** (In apposition to "gift").

**Cornelian, A precious stone, a variety of chalcedony.**

**But her fears.....ears,** In her fear she thought that men were shouting in a thundering voice after her.

**That.....off,** But that was only the lazy and careless conversation of men after a full dinner far off from where she was.

**Even when.....gown,** When she held up her fluttering gown to enable her to run.

**The noise.....birds,** The noise as she ran seemed to her louder than the chirruping of the birds.

**And her.....words,** Object to "drown".

**That to her.....indeed,** Her muttered words which also seemed to sound so loud in her fearful mind.

**L. 1850-58. Her fears.....indeed,** This is a successful attempt to describe the nervous fear of the princess caused by the consciousness of her guilt. Though she was doing a



good act, she suffered in conscience for the false means employed. She feared pursuit and detection and her nervous mind exaggerated every sound.

**Seen of none**, (Obsolete use "of") **Seen by none**.

**Abode**, **Waited**.

**Agnes**, The companion of the princess.

**Stole up**, **Moved** noiselessly towards.

**Unshrinking**, **Bold**.

**Turned about unto**, **Turned round to**.

L. 1864—1870 **Therewith.....friend**, It should be noticed that the ladies speak nothing. They understand one another's conduct by instinct, and have no desire to awaken Michael.

L. 1871 **Who etc.**, The princess was now trembling, her energy had been overtaxed, and now gave way.

**Wherefrom**, **From which**.

**Scarce.....clutch**, Almost as dull and lifeless as the pale marble stone (forming the basin of the fountain) to which, in her trembling, she clung for support.

**Blue-veined stone**, Pale marble stone with blue *veins*, or seams, or streaks, or dividing lines as in mineral rocks; white marble with blue streaks. (The adjective "*blue-veined*", is an *essential epithet* completing the word picture of a block of marble used to form the basin of a fountain; for such a stone has blue veins or streaks. Further there is an implied simile or comparison, viz: (1) her *blue-veined* hands were as pale as the blue-veined marble; (2) her hands were as dull and lifeless as the marble.)

**When.....touch**, When Agnes touched her.

Ll. 1880-82. **Let.....life**, Let me die and put an end to this agony which has so suddenly come upon me.

**In such wise**, **In such a way**.

**Too.....strife**, I am not strong enough to bear such a conflict (or storm) of passion.

**Would.....here**, I wish you had not brought me here, for in that case she would have never seen Michael, and all the other later events would not have taken place.

**Must.....fearest**, You must not thus give way to fear ; upon your preserving your courage now depends the safety of three lives, yours, Michael's, and mine.

**Sir Rafe**, The Seneschal.

**Boldly.....face**, If you meet boldly ; confront boldly.

**Past tree and bower etc.**, Past *trees* and fences, and *bowers*. (The rhetorical use of the *singular* instead of the *plural* may be noticed, producing a greater vividness of expression) ; beyond the trees and the groves and the fences.

**Bower**, Groves of trees. (The word is used in modern English in this sense ; it is obsolete in the sense in which it is used in l. 1812.

**High pleached (fence)**, (This is another instance of an *essential* epithet or adjective, as opposed to a mere *ornamental* epithet. An *essential* epithet expresses a part of the meaning of the word it describes,—i.e., the noun it qualifies,—and serves to present it more vividly before the mind's eye.) High and plaited fences i.e. fences which were plaited or woven in a trellis. Both *pleach* and *plait* have the same meaning and derivation, connected with Latin *plico* to fold, *plecto* or *plexum*, to weave, and Greek, *pleko*, to fold.)

**L. 1393 Wend**, Go.

**Maund**, Basket, (See note on l. 1463).

**Flask**, A narrow-necked vessel for holding liquids ; bottle.

**Island wine**, Wine from some island like Cyprus, Crete, Lesbos etc.

**Wherein she set etc.**, She put a bottle of wine, fruits, cakes etc. in a basket, for the princes. (See l. 1908).

**Manchet**, Small loaf or cake of fine white bread.

**Wheaten**, Made of wheat.

**Many such a delicate**, Many delicacies like those etc.

**Delicate**, (Obsolete as a noun) Delicate or dainty dishes ; sweet and dainty cakes.

**Many such.....queen**, Many other delicacies such as goddesses might have feasted upon in those simple times of

old before the Trojan war. Compare lines 1202-3 where the prince is compared to a Greek goddess.)

**Ate**, Used to eat.

**Goddesses**, The goddesses of the Greek myths and legends. (These are particularly referred to as seen from the next verse.

**Ere**.....queen, Before Helen became a queen at Troy.

L. 1900 **Hellen**, A mythical woman, who is the heroine of the celebrated Greek epic poem, Homer's Iliad. She was the daughter of a princess Leda by the god Jupiter. She was married to Menelaus, king of Sparta. She was considered the most beautiful woman in Greece. Paris a younger son of Priam, king of Troy (in Asia Minor), was brought up as a shepherd, and Venus, the goddess of love and beauty, had promised him the "most beautiful woman" as a bride. He went to the house of Menelaus as a guest and seduced his wife Helen (= Helena), and made her his wife in Troy. The Greek princes considered it a national insult and came with their ships and armies to Troy and besieged, and captured, destroyed, and set fire to it after a siege of ten years. These events are described in Homer's Iliad, above referred to. Homer is said to have lived about a thousand years before Christ.

**Trojan queen**, Wife of Paris, a prince of Troy.

**Sped on**, Went in haste.

**Had won**, Had reached.

**Fair bower of delight**, (See l. 1891-92). The delightful garden.

L. 1908. **Straight**, Forthwith; immediately.

**See**.....deed, Don't allow your fear to get mastery over you, and force you to withdraw from what you have done; you must now go right on, and not think of fear and going back from what you have done.

**Let love**.....now, Now the feeling of love must drive out all feelings of fear; love must triumph over fear.

L. 1911. **Thy life**.....felicity, With this new feeling of love, your life will gain a new value and will be so precious

that every moment you spend without attaining the object of your life (*i. e.* without the society of your husband, *i. e.* every moment before marriage) will be considered as a loss (*i. e.* wasted time), if indeed it were possible for you (—Agnes thinks it impossible—) to wait in patience while those precious moments fled away, counting them as they fled.

**Felicity, Happiness** *i. e.* as a wife of Michael.

L. 1915. **This.....day**, You will be married to-day.

**To see.....fine**, To see her take the wine-cup in her hand.

**What is.....well**, What is that vague report which I have heard, as though in a dream, and do not now quite remember?

**That some etc.**, The report is that some etc.

**That on thy hand etc.**, (Object to "did tell" in l. 1923)  
That a peasant's son would marry you.

**Spousal ring, Marriage ring**; the ring which is the sign of marriage. (From Latin "*sponsum*," to give promise of marriage).

**No Kaiser's son, No imperial prince.** (See note on l. 1619).

**But one.....beget**, The son of a peasant (Object *whom* is *understood*).

**On thy hand etc.**, The predicate is *set*, the object *ring*, and the subject is "son" or "King."

**One**, The predicate to "*one*" is "should set" understood.

**What.....thou?**, What have you to say to this story or report?

**Flushed red, Became red** with anger or shame.

**And thou—**, This is a broken sentence, interrupted by sudden passion. The break is expressed by the dash (—) The verb is to be supplied from the general sense. The break is generally due to a sudden emotion, which must help to find the meaning. The meaning here apparently is "I have heard such fables, and you also have apparently heard such fables, but tell me in serious earnest do you think etc." For such a sudden breaking off of a sentence, on account of passion, or

from the desire to express the meaning more significantly by *silence*, the Greek rhetoric gives the name "*Aposiopesis*," examples of which may be found in any work on "English Composition."

**Scathe, Harm.**

**Is it.....be,** What harm is there if I become the wife of such a man? Is there any lowering of my dignity if I were to do so? She does not think that her dignity will really suffer in any way, for he was worthy.

**God will.....King,** God will make him a King, if such is His will.

**How.....can,** We cannot make a better election than God.

**With this.....one,** Electing this one or that one; choosing this man or that man, by preference.

**God's.....man,** He who is the man of God's choice must be taken to be a worthy man; he whom God has chosen to be your husband must be admitted to be a worthy man.

**With that word,** Just as she finished speaking.

**Folk.....message,** People who were coming through the winding passages in the garden to communicate the King's message to the princess.

**Mazes, Winding or zig-zag paths.**

**L. 1938. She, Agnes.**

**Hardihead, (Obsolete) Hardihood; courage.**

**Pluck up etc., Put forth all your courage.**

**Now our.....tell,** They will only tell us what we know much better; they will tell us what we knew before them, and much better than they. (This is true, since Agnes and Cecily, by substituting another letter, not only know what is going to come, but have actually helped forward the making of the story).

**Even.....Spoke,** Just as she was speaking.

**All.....lords,** All the green foliage of the garden was glittering with the gold-embroidered dresses of the nobles.

**Noting not, Not paying heed to.:**

**By this, By this time.**

**Steeled her heart, Nerved her with energy ; made her so energetic.**

**Scarce otherwise, That scarcely otherwise (that is understood).**

**Scarce.....festival,** She seemed scarcely otherwise (*i.e.*, different from) than the dignified and spirited young princess that she appeared before the people when there was some tournament or grand feast at the court ; the proud and dignified princess she appeared to the people on great occasions, *that* she also now appeared.

**Tourney, Tournament ;** a mock-fight between knights, in which the combatants, generally on horse-back, fought to show their skill in arms, so called probably from the rapid *turning* of their horses.

**Dais, A raised floor, or platform at the upper end of a hall.**

**Was gained, Was reached.**

**For fear.....God,** Out of fear lest blinded by her love she might have mistaken a monster for a god, a worthless fellow for an angel of perfection ; she feared that perhaps her love might really have mistaken in making her choice.

**Monster, Object of "feigned".**

**She should.....wretchedly,** On the *supposition* that she was deceived by her love and had made a mistaken choice, she would have to endure the additional torment that the necessity to marry him would come from her own foolish act, *viz.*, her substituting a letter in place of the one sent by her father. That act is compared to an arrow-shot by herself, finally to hurt herself, though she had intended it for her advantage.

**Bolt, Arrow. (Metaphor).**

**Wretchedly, (Qualifies *smit*)** Causing greater torment than if shot by another.

**Gathered heart, Plucked up her courage.**

L. 1960. **Her love**, (Abstract for concrete) The object of her love; the person she loved.

**Weed, Dress**. (In this sense obsolete except in poetry and in the phrase "*widow's weeds*").

**Clad.....weed**, Dressed in the livery of her father's retainers.

**But proud, etc.**, But at the same time he did not appear a mean-hearted fellow, but rather a spirited and sanguine youth with a serene countenance.

**Astonied**, (Obsolete) Astonished; amazed at what might possibly be the contents of the letter. (See note on l. 257).

**For he thought**; For the young man was thinking in his mind; he was revolving in his mind the thoughts expressed in lines 1965 to 71.

L. 1965 **From.....this**, I have passed my life through various changes of fortune, turning from one point to another, and after all these strange experiences I am coming to this new scene in all my changing life.

**Trouble.....bliss**, A period of joy has always been succeeded in my life by a period of misfortune.

**I.....may**, I will bear both good fortune and ill fortune to the best of my ability.

**As I may**, (Here *may* has the earlier meaning of *can*) As well as I can.

**Ever.....day**, Continually as I live from day to day.

L. 1970-71 **My life.....chain**, I shall hammer out my life out of these two things, joy and sorrow, good fortune and ill fortune, making a long connected chain of these varied experiences. (*Hammer* governs *life*, and depends on "*I*" understood.)

**Midst.....thoughts**, While thus thinking.

**Every.....unhappiness**, He forgot all sorrow and trouble, and all the words in the language that denote sorrow and trouble.

**As read.....ears**, Because what he had at first taken to be an occasion for a new misfortune he now thought on

reconsideration was going to turn out doubly to his advantage; at first he thought his coming here might bring some trouble, but when he saw the princess, he had to "*read that word again*," i. e. revise his opinion, and find that his visit was turning into a great blessing.

Those words, The various words in the language that denote "unhappiness."

Bless.....ears, What he had taken as "*unhappiness*" now sounded in his ear as "*happiness*" with a double force.

L. 1977-78. And if, etc., And though it might be true that.

The rosy.....came, Became red and pale by turns.

Little.....now, People did not think there was any thing unusual about it; they took it as quite natural (they were not aware of the scene that had taken place in the garden; otherwise they might have detected in her some unusual commotion of feelings).

Shamefaced, Bashful.

Quite.....grown, She had become quite calm in her face. (Her fears were gone, because she saw that Rafe had no suspicions).

Raised.....his, Looked at him with her earnest eyes.

Grown.....bliss, His eyes expressed a melancholy tenderness at hearing the joyful news.

Where.....dear, Because here I love every thing which my father loves (and in consequence as father shows his love for you in this letter—the *substituted* letter—I am glad to obey him and become your wife).

L. 1993. So.....thee, Since my father knows and assures me that you are descended from a noble family. (See l. 1829-30).

Till.....away, Till our life comes to an end.

L. 1998-2000. What.....know not, I cannot say what deeper meaning he found in her words, which the bystanders failed to notice, but something of the kind he did find.



**Some.....words,** It might have been a faint quivering (tremor) as she pronounced the last words (in which case the tremor might be taken as an indication of a tender emotion she was striving to suppress).

**Some.....flow,** Or it might have been a little imperceptible pause or hesitation, interrupting her speech for a second or two.

**But yet.....aglow,** In any case that little something, which he detected and the others did not, roused a warmth of feeling in his breast.

**Count.....die,** I would even die.

**For him, For the King.**

**Send.....ears,** Speakest words which sound to me like music.

**Mazed, Confused.**

**Seemed.....quickly,** Seemed to grow suddenly languid and about to faint. (She was overpowered by an excess of emotion).

**Hum,** Whispering conversation.

**Chapel,** A place of worship attached to a palace or a private dwelling.

**Singing folk.....broke,** The singers outside burst into a joyous song. (The expression "*singing folk*" is vague. It may mean "*singers*" or merely "people outside began to sing, etc.)

**Carol,** A song of joy or praise.

**Heavenly,** Unspeakably melodious or sweet.

**Boys.....head.** The bishop with his vergers passed in solemn procession to the chapel.

**Verges,** Long rods borne in a procession before the bishop by church officials called "*vergers*."

**Bishop's.....head,** The mitred bishop; the bishop with his mitre or glittering head-dress.

**Nought.....bad,** He was not thinking of anything except the princess.

L. 2025. If he.....should be, She was thinking and saying to herself: "how boundless will be his love to me, if he were to know all the part I have played in this event;" i. e. if he were to know how he has been saved by me.

Mid.....minstrelsy, In the midst of singing and rejoicing.

The ancient.....Rose, This is the name of the Castle.

See l. 1525. The *Rose* was the badge of the king. See note on l. 1368.

Such.....shows, Was celebrating these festivities in the autumn. (The student should notice, that for one reason or another almost all the leading events of the story are described as having taken place in autumn, the season of fruitfulness).

Pageant, (General meaning:—a spectacle; showy exhibition; some sort of dramatic entertainment) Display of gaiety.

The King.....home, The king was melancholy and unhappy at home.

Tidings, News.

He who.....wed, He whom he had chosen to marry the daughter and heir. See lines 1174 to 80.

Slain.....street, Killed in a city riot.

L. 2036. When she.....see, When the princess, according to the king's promise (so the king thought) might expect to see her bride-groom.

L. 2035. Brooding on, Thinking deeply upon.

L. 2035. Meet, Proper.

To hold.....her, To keep the appointment made with the princess of visiting her at the castle.

L. 2039. Bid.....white, Advise her to put on a mourning dress instead of wearing her usual gold and silver fineries, for form's sake, as the young prince with whom the king had intended to marry her was dead. (A mourning dress is black).

l. 2037. Visage, Face; countenance.

The whole.....month, The whole of the month in which he had promised to visit her.

Drew anigh, Approached; came to.

The place, About half a furlong from the castle-gate  
(See l. 1786).

L. 2044-46. Where.....see, Where he hoped, without  
any doubt, to see the head of Michael displayed, looking with  
an angry frown upon the highway.

Highway, The main road.

'Twixt.....rode, In this thought he rode between the  
fruitful green trees.

Scarce.....while, Having no anxiety in his mind mean-  
while, (so sure he was to see Michael dead).

Humming.....smile, He was smiling and humming a  
tune to himself, (so full of joy he was).

Roundel, A song or catch (*Properly*, a song in which  
parts are repeated).

Ere.....anigh, Before he had quite approached the place.

Watch-horn, Watchmen's trumpets.

From high, From above; from the elevated site of the  
castle.

For.....so, Because it was their usual custom.

Well.....know, He thought they had recognised his  
banner.

Amidst.....afar, Far from among the stubble fields.

Stubble, The stubs or stumps of corn left when the stalk  
is cut.

A distant.....war, He seemed to hear warlike music.

L. 2056. Bade draw rein, Bade the men who accom-  
panied him stop their horses.

Push on again, ! Ride forward again.

L. 2058-60. They do.....bier, They are sending forth  
this warlike music as a salute or greeting because the princess  
thinks I am accompanied by the man who was to be her  
husband (whom I had promised to bring to her with me), who  
however is dead.

L. 2060. Bier, See note on l. 1619.

Minstrelsy, Music.

On they passed, The king with his company came on.

**Fife**, A small pipe used as a wind-instrument for military music. It has a slightly higher pitch than a flute.

**To see.....for**, To see the head of Michael by which he was going to prove false the prophecy made by the sage. (See lines 76 to 84).

L. 2064. **Striven**, Laboured hard to.

L. 2065. **The crushing.....lore** } These two lines are in  
L. 2066. **The last.....fate**, } *apposition* to "*what*"  
in l. 2064.

**The last.....fate**, By which the prophecy was to be finally overthrown or falsified.

**Confusion**, Overthrow ; destruction.

**Fate**, Prophecy.

**Drawn.....gate**, Having approached the gate still nearer.

L. 2068. **Bend**, Curve.

**The pageant**, The spectacle. (See l. 2029).

**The last.....King**, The last of the festive entertainments in honour of the marriage which had been kept waiting till the state entry of the king.

**Abode**, Waited for ; was kept waiting for. (*Abode* is here used as *transitive* verb).

**The solemn coming**, The arrival in state (*i. e.* in royal pomp).

L. 2071-76. **For first.....bills**, The description of the pageant or show is given in these lines.

**Dressed.....raiment**, Dressed in gold-embroidered robes.

**Coats of flame**, Cloaks of a glowing scarlet colour.

**The many-coloured lords**, The lords dressed in cloaks of varied colours.

**The knights' spears**, (Then there came) The knights with their gleaming spears.

**And.....swords**, (Behind came) The swordsmen with their swords.

**Backed by.....bills**, Supported by the axe-men with their axes ; with the axe-men in their rear.

**Bills**, Long two-handed axes. "*Bill*" is a kind of battle-axe.

L. 2076. **The glittering.....bills**, The gleaming forest of battle-axes i. e. a dense array of battle-axe men, whose gleaming axes moved like a forest. (*Wood* is a metaphor).

**Presaging**, Foreboding; having an ominous fear of.

**Ills**, Misfortunes. (He has a foreboding fear that something was gone wrong.

**Drew rein**, See note on l. 2056.

**Hardiness**, Boldness.

**Shrank.....hardiness**, Did not give way to fear; did not lose courage.

L. 2080. **Well.....die**, If the worst comes to the worst, I may have to die, but nothing beyond that.

**Perchance**, Perhaps. **But yet.....me**, But perhaps I may yet live many years longer.

**I will.....peace**, I will keep silent about it; I will not betray myself by useless exclamations or expressions of surprise etc.

**The dumb man's.....increase**, (A kind of sententious remark, full of wordly wisdom like a proverb) For I find that the man who keeps silent sees his estate growing larger and larger; the silent man meets with wordly prosperity, his fortunes are continually on the increase.

**Borders (increase)**, Estate; property; fortune. *Borders* in here a figure of speech, *metonymy*, a sign of the estate for an estate, or *synecdoche*, part of an estate for the whole estate).

**As he.....heart**, As he was thus seeking to encourage himself.

**Part**, Separate; divide; make a way through.

**Down.....lane**, Through the long passage or opening made between the crowd on either hand, who were all singing and playing various musical instruments.

**Hand locked in hand**, *With* hand locked in hand; or hand *being* locked in hand.

**Locked, Clasped.**

**The twain, Michael and Cecily.**

**As fair.....found, As beautiful as any other married couple on earth.**

**Clad.....are, Clothed in princely robes.**

**Chiefest lords, The principal nobles.**

**Sheathed swords, With their swords in their scabbards.**

**The banners.....bore, Were holding up the flags or ensigns of the Kingdom.**

**Pondered sore, Had been reflecting in a painful agony.**

**By when they reached, By the time they reached him.**

(The preposition "*by*" governs the whole clause "*when they reached*").

**Though indeed.....need, Though indeed there was little time for reflection.**

**L. 2096 Betwixt saddle-blow, Between the moment when he was first startled at seeing Michael and the moment when the old knights bearing the banners came up, with noisy din to his saddle.**

**Startled, Excited with a sudden shock or alarm.**

**Heart's.....pang, The agony of pain that seized him at the first shock of seeing Michael.**

**Anigh, Near ; close to**

**Saddle-bow, The bow or arch in the front of the saddle, or the pieces which form the front.**

**Scowled heavily, Looked with a severe frown.**

**Ere any.....cast, Before caring to look at them.**

**L. 2102 Whence.....me, From where do you come, what sort of people are you, and what comedy is this you are playing before me ?**

**L. 2104-5 Cecily.....tight, Cecily fainted, being aware of the cause of her father's anger and clung more closely to Michael's hand for support.**

**Seemed heard, She made an effort to speak, and it seemed she was speaking, but no one next to her was able to hear any thing.**

**Meseems**, It seems to me. (Obsolete *impersonal verb*.)

**Youngling**, (Obsolete in this sense) Young man.

**Yea, Yes**. (The Seneschal has no suspicion that any thing has gone wrong.)

**Straight, Straightway**.

**E'en as**, Just as.

**Bound me to**, Require me to do.

**Diddest**, (Obsolete form) Didst.

**On what.....away**, On what day she was married.

**Since that**, Since (*That* is redundant in modern English.)

**They gained etc**; Entered into the happy state of married life.

**Bowed down in thought**, Bent down while thinking.

**At the last**, (Obsolete) At last.

**Joining of the yoke**, Fulfilment of the marriage union.

**Who dost.....word**, Who are so diligent in carrying out all my orders.

**Wear thou.....king**, You will be a knight of the highest rank.

**Collar**, This is worn as a mark of knighthood of the highest rank, such as knights of the Garter, (the highest order of knighthood in England, instituted by King Edward III) and knights of the Golden Fleece (the highest order of knighthood on the continent, instituted by Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, a contemporary of King Edward IV of England). The Collar was made of gold and decked with gems.

**L. 2128-30 And a duke's.....field**, From this day you are promoted to the rank of a duke.

**Banner cut foursquare**, The square banner of a duke. (A knight's banner is the pennon, or pointed flag, which he bore in battle or at tournaments. When a knight was promoted to the rank of nobility the point of his pennon was cut off and it was thus turned into a square banner.

**In tourney**, At tournaments.

**In stricken field**, On the battle-field. (Literally a field where *strokes* are given and received;—*stricken* being the

past participle of *strike*—compare also the expression “well foughten field.”)

L. 2131 **This mine heir, My son-in-law Michael.**

L. 2131-35 **But this.....alone, The king declares that Michael will henceforth be his colleague or associate on terms of equality in enjoying the dignity and fulfilling the functions of royalty.**

**Nor be.....miscontent, Don't be dissatisfied with him on the ground that.**

**Miscontent, (Obsolete) Dissatisfied.**

**For that, Because.**

L. 2137-38 **For.....came, Because he came to you without any pomp or retinue.**

L. 2139. **He is.....name, He is sprung from a very ancient family.** (The King means the most ancient family in the sense that he was descended from the *first* man and woman, *Adam* and *Eve*, than whom there is no more ancient descent, which, in fact, is common to every human being. But Sir Rafe and the rest probably were not able to follow up the King's line of thought).

**Damascus, In Syria.** It is one of the most ancient cities in the world, generally considered *the* most ancient.

L. 2144. **Ages ago his line was born, His family lived and flourished centuries ago.** (See note on l. 2139).

**Ere yet.....corn, Before man learnt the art of agriculture; from a time when men only lived on fruit and knew not the use of corn.**

L. 2146. **Anigh to Paradise, Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, were (according to the story related in the Old Testament) at their creation placed by God in Paradise or the Garden of Eden.** (See note on l. 1644). After the disobedience of God's command by Adam and Eve, they were driven out of Paradise, and the tradition is that they lived near where the city of Damascus was afterwards founded.

**Grew stout and wise, Grew in wisdom and strength.**



L. 2148. **Bore**, Brought ; has brought ; has derived.

**No little of**, (*Litotes* or *meiosis*) A considerable portion of.

**Their piercing lore**, Their acute learning or intellect.

**Look then.....happiness**, You must therefore expect a period of great happiness in his reign.

**Every.....redress**, He will set right every thing ; he will give relief from every form of injustice.

**Then did.....adown**, Then he leapt down from his horse, amid the loud acclamation of the people who greeted his words with great joy.

L. 2159. **Right**, Very ; quite.

L. 2158-2170. **How many an.....cherubim**, What happy time might I have spent in this garden, what glorious victories might I have won, what noble deeds performed, what reputation gained, what bliss enjoyed, what freedom from anxiety, what calmness, what satisfaction for a well-spent life,—if only I had left the future to take care of itself and not attempted to govern the destinies of my kingdom, as if I were an all-wise (= omniscient) God sitting in the midst of his angels. (Lines 2158 to 2170 form *one* sentence, the *principal clause* consists of a string of co-ordinate clauses, piled into a heap one upon another, from line 2158 to l. 2167, and *balanced* against the *conditional clauses*, lines 2168 to 2170. The co-ordinate clauses in the *principal* sentence are nicely balanced with one another).

L. 2150. **Had I made**, *Would* I have made happy.

L. 2165. **Had I had**, *Would* I have had.

**What little, etc.**, What freedom from care would I have enjoyed.

L. 2166. **What calmness, etc.**, "*Calmness*" is object to some verb like "*had I had*" understood.

L. 2167. **What joy, etc.**, "*Joy*" is object to a verb understood in the same manner as explained in the preceding note.

**Joy.....days**, Joy derived from a well-spent life.

L. 2163. **What bright.....won**, What renown *would* my deeds have won for me. (In the words "*my deeds have won*", the verb "*might*" is understood to be borrowed from l. 2162, making it mean, "my deeds *might* have won").

**If I had.....alone**, If I had left the future to take its own course. (If I had not bothered myself about such questions as who was to be my heir, my son-in-law, etc., and in particular if I had not made so many criminal attempts to falsify the prophecy concerning Michael).

**Like God.....cherubim**, Like God who is enthroned in heaven in the midst of His angels. (He means to say that he had in vain tried to act as if he were all-mighty, all-knowing, which only God in heaven is).

**Cherubim**, (A Hebrew word used in English, the plural of *cherub*) Angels; celestial beings.

**My.....dim**, I am getting older.

**All this fairness.....wind**, I have, so to say, thrown to the winds all the joys and happiness. I might easily have enjoyed in youth. (He means the joys, glory, bliss, etc., described in lines 2158—67).

**I have tossed.....winds**, I have deliberately thrown to the winds.

**All have lost for nought**, All this I have lost and gained nothing in exchange. "For" = in exchange for.

**Yet.....live**, I will try to live better for the little life that is left to me in the future.

**Nor will.....move**, Without looking with too much regret on the past; without repining over my lost opportunities in the past. (The past being *irrevocable*, nothing is gained by repining over it. It would only be a sign of unmanliness).

**Nor forward.....shore**, Neither looking with anxiety to what is coming in the future.

**Doubtful shore**, (Metaphor) The future which is doubtful and causes anxiety. (But the king is now resolved not to agitate himself about the future).

**Sign to turn**, A signal to return to the castle.

**Straight.....gold,** The autumn air was soon glowing with the burnished steel of the swords and spears, and the gold embroidered robes of the lords and ladies, as they began the procession on their return to the castle.

**Through the trees.....more,** The songs were heard once again, the sounds rising over the trees.

**Carol,** See note on l. 2017.

**Until.....bush,** Until the thrush itself, far off in its thickets, began to sing, though it was an autumn evening.

**Made.....spring,** Recollecting in its memory the familiar season of spring. (The sounds of singing and merriment heard in the air, so unusual in autumn time, made the thrush think that the familiar spring days were once more returning, at least it was reminded of the familiar days of spring, and so began to sing itself.

**Long-lived spring,** The spring-time in which it had lived so long.

L. 2182. **Autumn bush,** As mentioned in a previous note most of the scenes of the story take place in autumn. Michael's coming to the castle, his marriage, and the king's visit eleven days later (see line 2116), all these events take place in autumn. The student should refer to lines 1453, 1510, 1679, 1856 and 2179.

**Tabouring,** Playing on the tabor or tabour. (A tabour = a small drum played with one stick.

**His love, His wife.** Note the use of the abstract for the concrete.

**Nor will the poor folk, etc.,** It was a golden age "or *millennium*", a time of unparalleled happiness and innocence.

**When.....ways,** When a man would not care to steal even if golden coins lay temptingly in open view on the road.

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## PARAPHRASE.

**Lines 1-16.**—There lived in ancient times a king who ruled over a vast empire. He had much wealth and what he prized more great renown too. His life was happy and his kingdom full of peace; whereas other kingdoms involved in or exposed to wars were getting worse and worse. His capital was, therefore, a seat of all the learning of the time, and he welcomed to it everyone who possessed any learning. He thus became a king among sages and by degrees acquired knowledge from every learned man, and many states plunged in anarchy and confusion gladly accepted his firm though stern rule.

**Lines 42-73** —The king said to the man, "It is fortunate you have come. What art do you know? Can you tell old-time tales in verse or narrate accounts of ancient wars? Are you an expert in astrology or alchemy? Or, are you a surgeon who can set right broken limbs, rescue dying men from death and help them to live as long as you yourself can? Or what knowledge do you bring to this city where only the wise are dear to me and my people?" The sage replied, "O King, I know but little for certain. Yet, I have long gone through the hard work which, uncertain in results, only brings scholars to an untimely grave. And now, for all my labour of years to get every kind of knowledge possible for man, I have only this return that I can spend the few remaining months of my life in learned leisure. And even now I am almost as far from being all-knowing as I was in my youth, when I tended my flock on the hill-sides covered with thyme and exposed to stormy winds. Yet I have come to your city to tell you something that I learnt from the stars. For as I gazed at them with a longing to cast off my worn-out mortal body and thus be freed from the ridicule and scorn of the people, and as I read in them, now with joy and now with fear, the unalterable decrees of fate, I discovered something about you and your successor to the throne.

**Lines 114-153.**—The wise man said, "You are perhaps right in calling my humble knowledge folly. Well, be you wise then, and wise to the last. Whatever your fate ordains for you, accept without resisting. It is futile to struggle to get out of the meshes of fate. Now listen! Nearly a year ago, when the sun was

## THE MAN BORN TO BE KING.

blazing hot, under this very tree you gave Antony a cup set with jewels but containing poisoned wine, drinking which he died forthwith. You killed him because, though at first you trusted him above all others, you soon found he knew far too much for your safety. He alone knew how Marshal Hugh came by his death, how he drew the marshal in his ride into an ambush where his enemies killed him with a shower of blows."

"So, you know," said the king, "the secret of my being the cause of his death. But remember I have only to say, 'Help! the magician is murdering me!' and twenty men will in a moment pierce you through and through with their swords."

The sage replied, "O king, I am not to be frightened with such a threat of death. Death will spare me some years yet, either because I am not afraid of its terrors or because I am doomed to drag on, for some time yet, my weary life. But as for you, do pay heed to my certain prophecy: wise men will praise you for it. You need not be afraid of my knowing your secret; for I am now going back to my grey tower, high up on the heather-covered hill where the fierce eagle pounces upon running hares or fresh-born lambs. There I am the absolute lord of a small tribe to whom your name is but a word now and then falling upon their ears, who know nothing of your greatness, not even whether you are a man or a beast.

**Lines 185-190.**—He went on in the pursuit of his splendid game, without caring whether many or few kept up with him, whether his way was rough or smooth. But at last the gathering darkness of the night made it impossible for him to see and brought his hot pursuit to an end.

**Lines 237-243.**—The king thanked him and promised that his kindness would not go unrewarded.

"Let us not talk of reward now", said the peasant, "I am afraid that in the morning I shall feel too miserable to be cheered by gold."

**Lines 314-330.**—Between the peasant and his dead wife lay the full and well-sized baby-boy just born. The king waited at the door and watched the man so stricken with grief that he was heedless of everything about him. When, however, he turned his gaze on the child, in whom he saw his future foe, his heart was

filled with bitter hatred, and his determination to falsify the prophet's words grew stronger. The sight of the poor man's grief but increased his hatred and he only thought of himself as the last of a long unbroken dynasty of kings. Yet, with mingled pain and scorn he surveyed that hovel where every thing spoke of poverty and gloom.

**Lines 344-354.**—Indeed, later in years, he vividly remembered that desolate and sorrow-stricken home with its dismal walls, and often then he recalled the peasant's tears which fell fast over his tattered sack-cloth garments and, amidst these, his wild cries partly praying for his wife or cursing the ill-omened child. He also recalled to mind the faint cries of the child whom he feared as his future foe and who was to succeed to his great throne.

**Lines 387-400.**—"Sir," said the peasant weeping and confused with shame, "since my wife who kept house for me is now dead, you can do your pleasure with the child, though I had hoped to have my son to assist me in my daily work. He must, however, go away from me if he is at all to grow to be a man; and alone must I wander about somewhere, one place to me being as good as another. Pardon me if I have not thanked you enough. Not even God have I the heart to thank for what he has left, since what I prized most is taken away from me."

**Lines 444-454.**—Then his eye gleamed with a new thought that crossed his mind and he felt for his sword; and turning round to the lords and squires, he said, "Ride on, sirs, the path is clear and safe. I have no cause to suspect my subjects nor would enemies wander about in these open places. But as for me I would go home in a leisurely fashion through these fields noting how the crops are growing, while the squire carrying the child will amuse me on the way."

**Lines 508-536.**—The King said, "Come what may, I will not care, if only I see this cradle lost in this whirlpool or entangled in the refuge of the river and turned upside down."

He had hardly ended when they found themselves on the bridge. He went up the plank, and stopping near its opposite end, saw the squire stop too, bound over the railing of the bridge and drop down the unfortunate child. Just then he heard the squire mutter some words, the box fall with a splashing sound into the water and the

child, now awakened from sleep, uttering a cry. He also saw the cradle caught up in the whirlpool and almost sinking but still holding the child and not being overturned. Seeing this the King did doubt a little whether he had quite rid himself of his little foe. But with a frown he turned to go home and did not know what more he could do to gain his end. As he rode homewards he showed little concern at what had happened, and asked stout Samuel to come nearer to his left and talk to him lightheartedly on such unimportant things as a king would care to talk about with his servants.

**Lines 555-560.**—It was now fourteen years since he had slept on the heap of bracken and dreamt the dream, now remembered occasionally, when he spent a long night till daybreak in restlessness without a wink of sleep.

**Lines 718-729.**—The next morning the King was sitting alone talking with Samuel who was still doing wicked things that were sure to lead him to Hell. After a while Samuel left the presence of the king and with a vicious smile said to himself, "Fortunate are those who have not to serve kings, for they may ruin their souls in gaining their own ends, but I am ruining my soul for the sake of the king. Besides, who knows but this boy might survive this second design on his life, the boy who as an unfed baby could not be drowned?"

**Lines 818-832.**—Meanwhile Michael wrapt in joy at the vision of a noble life of fame and forgot the happy days he had lived and the happy dreams they had brought, which were now on the point of being realised. Through the open mill he looked at the grey and wind-swept hill, but instead of the hill he saw a wonderful place with new faces constantly appearing in it and the part he was to play in it. But Samuel laughing scornfully asked the miller how he could suppose that a miller's life would be fit for the boy whom the king believed to be of noble birth. He asked the boy what was his idea of happiness.

**Lines 883-897.**—But just as he was turning to go, his good foster-mother came out of the house, and embracing him with her rough hands, said, "All these years you have made me happy, but I now pay for that happiness with my present sorrow at our parting. But may your life be happy, my pretty boy, and its end peaceful. Remember, when you rise to a high position, that we

in our house at all times gave you of our best. We both truly loved you. But now that you are going, our house will be a sad place, and we ourselves, who felt young in your company, will grow old quicker when you are gone away.

**Lines 909-921.**—They went up the bank of the river as the brown birds in the sedges sang sweetly though indistinctly in the clear autumn afternoon, and with gradual progress passed the familiar stream. Now Michael, too young to suspect death or even to know fear, brushed all regrets and once more began to dream of his future greatness. The whole world appeared to him lovely and bright. Nor did any harsh words of Samuel made him feel that he was mocked at or scolded, for Samuel was busy with his own thoughts.

**Lines 951-985.**—They rode higher and higher up the hill, each thinking out his own thoughts. At last when Michael turned round, he saw the meadows extending before him far and wide. The green fields had, here and there, put on a golden hue and were alive with a variety of insects invisible to the eye. Meanwhile he found his way lined, on either side, with trees which he kept gazing at. Shortly afterwards he turned round to look back, and saw a number of dark and tall trees growing there and forming a wall. The travellers then found themselves surrounded by clusters of sweet-smelling spruce-trees rustling dismally. And when Michael again turned round, he could catch in the distance slight glimpses of sunlight like the faint light of stars, and overhead through the branches the sunlight filtered down like faint twilight. Michael had never been there before, in fact, he had never gone beyond his native green meadows fresh with sun-shine, rain and breeze, and had never before entered those dark woods. He now gazed around and expected some wonderful things to happen as in the nursery tales known to him. He looked for gigantic wood-cutters, clad in blue, the descendants of the old race of giants who were the native dwellers and lords of the forests, for dwarfs working at underground smithies, and dancing fairies who, according to the old stories, looked beautiful when seen in front, but who looked ugly and shrivelled when seen from behind.

**Lines 1064-69.**—Then he leapt on to his horse from off the ground and, without trying to quiet his fears by calm reasoning, he supposed that the guardian angel of the boy was coming to destroy



the murderer even before the soul of the boy had left his body. For one moment he listened in terror to the bell and then mounting on his fine horse madly galloped away. The horse, too, as excited, sped through the thick fir forest, neither trees nor stones hindering his progress, till at the end of his mad career, he dropped down dead near the bridge. Samuel, confounded by terror and his sense of guilt, trudged on foot throughout the night, and at break of day, arrived half-dead at the palace gate.

**Lines 1091-1110.**—Nevertheless, the King hardly reassured, frowned and said, "I thought I had sent a true soldier with both strength and brains to carry out my orders; but here you come like an effeminate coward, nervous with your headlong flight and looking stupid with fear; and yet you have brought no proof of the boy's death." With that he rose and went away, and pondering over it all the day, thought that things were not quite so bad as they first looked and that his royal line might yet continue. So he gave money and other rewards to Samuel. But these gifts could hardly lengthen his life; for though less old than sinful, he died before winter came and was buried in the chancel of the church, in a tomb carved with the images of saints which seemed to guard his body.

**Lines 1145-1164.**—In this place far from royal courts and towns, the ancient king used to watch his beloved wife disporting herself in summer in the green meadows, or standing in the vineyards with all her jewels on and giving orders to the grape-gatherers who almost adored her for her beauty. Many years had passed since the time of these people, and their evil actions were either forgotten or remembered as old romantic episodes under the magic influence of time that mellows all harsh things and converts pain and loss into pleasure and gain. Nevertheless the blood-red brick fortifications stood there as strong as when the ancient people lived within them; and the gardens round about them were as lovely as ever, as if they could smile always on the actions, good or bad, of the inmates of the castles.

**Lines 1191-1216.**—Every morning she awoke only to find fresh joys added to her life. The whole world was spread out before her a happy, glorious place to live in. She had not yet felt on her lips the hot kisses of love which put to flight a maiden's feelings of fear and modesty. Conscious of innocence she could

without wincing look full in the faces of men. Nor did she feel confused at hearing an unexpected footstep. She did not inspire in anybody any feelings of passion except that feeling of adoration which a man might feel for a goddess and which the ancient Greeks evinced towards many of their queens. Now she set off for the fair ancient castle attended by her armed guards. The lark sang over the corn-fields in the early morning but did not arouse in her thoughts of love. When the sun was high up in the sky, her thoughts were of ambition, not of love. The sun set and the evening came on, but thoughts of love did not come with it. The moon did not bring her sad thoughts such as lovers know. Nor did the dawn cause her the futile regrets felt by love-lorn maids. But undisturbed by the least thought of love she entered the gate of that mansion and there awaited her bridegroom.

**Lines 1240-55.**—At the same time the king, casting a seemingly casual glance at the Abbot's men, spoke again and said, "By heaven, your men are very tall indeed, Earl Abbot. Do they live in the woods and are there many like these? I should be very glad if these could join in my war-cry when I go on war against my enemies." As he was speaking his voice suddenly grew low and unsteady, and he hardly heard the faint noises in the hall or the monk's reply; for again he saw the eyes of Michael looking from behind the steel helmet that protected his head. These very eyes, gentle, bold, though awed by the presence of the king, had he seen shining beneath golden locks when he had met the boy under the apple trees at the mill.

**Lines 1359-75.**—All the time the story was being told, the king sat leaning forward, his eyes distracted and his face pale and careworn, but grasped only a few words. When, however, the story ended, the king, conscious that his voice had turned hoarse and low, said, "My good Lord Abbot, since this your soldier looks right loyal, I should like to know what you would take from me to transfer him to us. It is better for him to be ranked among my retinue than to waste his life in a cloister studying books which no man likes to read." The monk replied, "If you are in great need of such men, you may have him. My soldiers are not particular about beauty. Besides, as you suggest, it is not proper that the ladies of your court should miss such a fair young man."

**Lines 1414-34.**—"Be wise and careful and your success in this may be the beginning of a glorious career for you". So spoke the king, unaware that fate was working out its own plan so different from his. Michael went away and soon met Hugh a black, big, and blunt man, who was an excellent soldier though a man of few words. The two, mounting their horses, started and rode southward all the day. I cannot say if the king hoped that Hugh would do what Samuel had done before. But certain it is that he did not speak out his mind to Hugh. For Hugh, though hard-hearted and narrow-minded, was, like all true warriors, unfamiliar with all arts except those of warfare and was perfectly true in the performance of his duty. Still the course of our story might have been different had not Michael been studiously gentle and restrained his temper often aroused by the insulting words used by Hugh.

**Lines 1506-46.**—He rode a long time until, when the sun was high up the sky, he found that he had emerged from a hollow which under the shade of its yew-trees still preserved here and there some of the overnight dew, and that he had gained the boundary of the plateau. From here he could view the valley beneath, which appeared most lovely through the misty air of autumn days, the bright yellow sheaves of corn, the dark green autumn leaves, the green meadows on the river-side, and the bright blue streams running through them,—all these enhancing the beauty of the valley. The lovely scene stretched away for miles from the cold rocky hill, on which Michael stood, right up to the hill-tops on the other side, where the white cliffs overlooking the slopes of vine formed a broken line against the back-ground of the sky. Between the vineyards and the streams shone the gilded spires of a great building, and there too lay the goal of his rapid journey, the Castle of the Rose, enclosed within many a flower-garden.

He then made his way downward and soon found himself between hedges teeming with sweet-scented flowers. Here he heard the confused murmur of unseen reapers cutting sheaves of wheat with their sickles. But when he came to the stream which divided the fertile plain into two parts, he slowly passed the bridge across it; for he could thence see the owners of the fields resting themselves on a patch of grass under an old elm-tree, and passing round the jar, as they drank. Near them on the turf were lying

their sickles of ashwood handles between which were wide spread out their food. It consisted of white cheese with specks of green, onions, rye-bread, summer apples of red skin and pink flesh, and thin yellow grapes fully ripe and plucked from vines on some cottage walls.

**Lines 1628-36.**—"You may, if you want, go to Lady Bertha's pleasure-garden hard by. This lady was esteemed so adorable that this palace was built for her. She captured the hearts of many, and died after a long life of sin, and is still remembered. May God give rest to her soul !

**Lines 1667-72.**—Even in its decay it was touchingly fair. The trees along its walls bore plenty of fruit in autumn, and the thrushes which had been born in the last spring and knew nothing yet of the rigours of the coming winter, flitted about carelessly through the grass.

**Lines 1741-76.**—She took the princess by the hand and persuaded her to look at Michael, for now a feeling of love had brought a blush to Cecily's fair face and her heart began to beat fast, as with love in it, she drew near to see the face she had never seen till that happy hour.

So she stepped softly on the bed of pink-edged flowers, but when she came near the sleeping youth, love and modesty combined to dim eyes already full of strange visions. But when at last she did look upon him, she rejoiced to see him so fair ; and now love began to work in her heart ; nor did she think it wrong to look upon one who was her own, for she had no doubt that he whom she had expected to meet in all the splendour of a military escort, had chosen to slip alone to court her. At this thought love waxed stronger in her till she felt that leaving him would give her a pang. But with growing love came fear too, and while love bade her stay, fear urged her to go away. In such agitation she at last turned to go sighing and murmuring softly to herself. But as she gathered up her dress, and with her changed and shamed face looked round for her merry companion, she saw her but found her suddenly turned grave and sad as with an unpleasant surprise. For the maid, during Cecily's confusion, had drawn the king's letter from Michael's loosened girdle and read it. She now showed it to Cecily and whispered, "Read this and quickly

do what you wish. What a pity that such a handsome youth should be killed. But come further away first."

**Lines 1840-58.**—As soon as she had finished writing, she heard the people move in the hall. She could not bear to think how hard her lot would be if she failed in her plans. Boldly, though with a feeling of guilt, she enclosed the fateful letter that might mean life or death, and contrived to seal it with a signet ring of cornelian given her by her father.

Then she ran quickly downstairs and came to the garden; but so frightened was she that the idle after-dinner talk of man at a distance sounded like shouts and thunders in her ears; even the rustling of her gown as her limbs brushed against it while running seemed loud enough to drown the chirping of the birds, and her own words, though muttered while she was out-of-breath, seemed to her very loud.

**Lines 1942-83.**—Even as she spoke the messengers arrived and the green garden looked bright with the gold-embroidered clothes of the courtiers. Cecily, hardly noting what they said, rose up to go. But by this time she was so determined to play her part, that now she looked as unconcerned as when she appeared before the people at a tournament or a festival. But when they reached the hall and walked up the steps leading to its entrance, she slightly bowed down her head nor raised it till she had reached the plat-form at the other end; for she feared for a time that blinded by love she might have mistaken a worthless fellow for an angelic youth and that then she would be the instrument of her own ruin. But when she had gone up to the crowded dais where men bustled to and fro, she took courage and lifted her eyes. Then she saw before her him on whom she had fixed her love, clad in the livery of the king's retainers, but proud in his bearing, flushed but serene. He did not seem to fear what might happen to him, nor did he look surprised, for he thought, "My life has led me through many a strange experience until it has brought me to this. Troubles will indeed come after happiness. I will go through both as best I can. Nay, from day to day, for many a year, shall I continue to live a life chequered with pleasure and pain.

In the midst of these thoughts he met the eyes of the princess; and forthwith banished all thoughts of sorrow, and all his previous misgivings were now transformed into a great joy.

The princess, however, was not trembling with fear ; and what with her misgivings or her love and bashfulness, her sweet and bright face turned red and pale in turn. But those present thought this to be only the natural bashfulness of a maiden face to face with her bride-groom.

**Lines 2035-49.**—Brooding over this misfortune he thought, since the day fixed for presenting her husband to his daughter had come, it was but proper for him to visit her and ask her at best to change her bright raiment for a mourning dress. So one bright morning when the month in which he had promised to see her had passed, he came to the place where he confidently expected to see Michael's ghastly head on the point of a spear along the highway. He rode between rows of fruit-laden trees with a smiling face and carelessly humming a song to himself.

**Lines 2077-2083.**—Now the king reined in his horse with a mind full of many forebodings of coming evils. Yet he could summon his natural boldness and thought to himself, "At the worst I shall but die soon : but who knows but I may yet live many years more ? I will say nothing, for, he prospers who knows when to hold his tongue'."

**Lines 2093-2103.**—By the time they reached him, the king had worried enough though the time between his first alarm at the sight of the proceesion and the arrival of the standard-bearers near him was too brief for reflection. Looking away from them he frowned hard and for a time said nothing. At last, before he could even caste a glance at the couple, he said, "Whence do you come, what people are you, and what is all this show for ?"

**Lines 2158-77.**—The king said, "What happy time might I have spent in my gardens, what glorious victories might I have won, what noble deeds performed, what renown gained, what bliss enjoyed, what freedom from anxiety, what calmness of mind in my hopes for fame, what joy of a well-spent life, might have been mine, if only I had left the future to take care of itself and not ventured to govern the destinies of my kingdom as if I were God sitting in the midst of his angels. But now I am old, have wantonly thrown away my fair prospects. I have lost everything but gained absolutely nothing. Yet I will endeavour to live better the few remaining years of my life. I will not brood over the past nor peer into the uncertain future."

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## THE STORY OF "The Man Born to be King."

Many years ago there lived a King who ruled over an extensive and prosperous Kingdom. His capital was a seat of learning and arts, and to his court flocked from all parts of the world men of learning and wisdom who were richly rewarded and honoured. The King, one day, held a great feast, and among the the wise and learned men there assembled was a very old, decrepit sage who could read the destinies of men. This sage told the King that he would be succeeded not by one of his own line, but by a poor man of lowly birth. When the King learned this he was at first very angry, and could think of nothing else, so that he went about his realm in a joyless and sad mood of mind. But in course of time he forgot his sorrow. He became gay again, and lived right merrily, and married a princess.

Now, it happened that about a year after his marriage this King went out to hunt in the forest. When evening fell he found himself far from his companions, in a part of the wood that he did not know. Dismayed at having thus lost his way, he wandered hither and thither until at last he came to a poor peasant's hut. Here he knocked and asked for shelter, which was readily granted.

While he slept the King dreamed, and in his dream he seemed to hear a voice that cried "Take! Take!" Trembling, the King started up, but there was nothing to be seen, and so with a sigh he laid himself down to sleep again. But hardly had he closed his eyes than the voice sounded once more, and this time the words were, "Give up! Give up!"

Then it seemed to the King as if an old, old man appeared and bent over him, saying, with a mocking smile: "You may either take it or give up. What difference does it make? The new-born child will succeed you to your throne, when you are dead and buried".

At these words the King awoke in great fright and confusion.

In the morning the peasant came to the King and told him that a son had been born to him during the night. Immediately the King knew the meaning of those strange words he had heard. This child was the low-born churl who should reign after him.

While he still stood in doubt and fear, the sound of a horn echoed through the wood. It was the King's people returning.

The poor peasant looked with dull amazement at the prancing horses, and the glittering dresses of the knights and squires.

Then the King turned to the peasant and offered, as a reward for his kindness that night, to take the child and bring it up as his own.

At first the peasant refused to part with his child but at length, dazzled by the vision of his glorious future, and tempted by the great wealth in golden coin which the King offered him, he agreed. The child, in his rough wooden cradle, was handed to Squire Samuel, one of the King's men, and the hunting party rode away.

Now, the King did not mean the child good, but evil, and presently coming to a small-stream, he commanded the squire to cast the baby in, that it might never trouble him again.

The wicked deed was done. The King rode on, moody and silent, until he reached his own home. There he learned that in his absence the Queen had given birth to a beautiful girl-child, and the news made his heart rejoice.

Years passed away. The King reigned secure on his throne, but the memory of his evil deed was always with him, making him restless and unhappy.

One summer morning the King went out into the forest to hunt, and chance led him at noon-tide to a mill by a stream, where he stopped to rest. The miller came out to welcome him, and with him was a beautiful young man.

The miller was short-limbed, and red-faced, with long, lank, flaxen hair. But the young man was tall and of a most noble appearance. It was plain to see that the two were not father and son.

"Who is this boy?" asked the King; and the miller called his wife to tell how the lad came to them:—

"It is eighteen years ago" said she, "that one day, while riding along this river side I heard the cry of a child and immediately saw a box floating in the weeds of the river. Dismounting from my mule, I waded into the stream and took up the box in which the child was lying. I brought the child home, warmed and fed it and brought it up as my own".

The King listened, and his thoughts went back to the day when he had borne the helpless baby from the peasant's hut. That child had escaped his evil designs, and now stood before him, a noble young man—a man born to be King.



The monarch's face grew treacherous and cruel, but craftily he tried to smile. Then he called the lad to him, and asked his name.

"Michael", said the miller's wife, "we called him that because he came to us on Michaelmas Day".

The King then departed with his attendants. The next day, in a private conference with his old squire, the King charged the latter to bring about the destruction of the boy. In obedience to the order of the king, the squire set off for the mill. When he came near to the place he saw the boy and was struck with his noble appearance. He then went to the miller and gave him the King's letter. The purport of it was that the King desired to have the boy at his court and that he would be promoted to the rank of nobility. The miller was reluctant to part with the boy. But the squire persisted in his demand, and when much gold was offered to the miller, the latter agreed to hand over the boy to the squire. Michael and the squire then set off for the palace. The squire did not take the proper road, but he led the boy over the hills, through the forest until they came to the edge of a valley. Here Samuel asked the boy to dismount. When they reached the bottom of the valley Samuel asked Michael to tighten the girths of his saddle, and, as he bent to do the squire's bidding, the latter struck him in the side with his dagger. The boy staggered and fell, and Samuel was about to deal a second blow to make sure that he was dead when he heard the tinkling of a bell. The squire thinking that a messenger from heaven was coming to avenge the boy's murder, was seized with a superstitious fear and sought safety in flight. He reached the palace at dawn quite faint with hunger and fright. Before the next winter the squire died, not so old in years as in sin.

Some years passed, and the King's wife died. The King married again hoping that he might get a son to succeed him. The King about this time sent his daughter to a distant castle, called the "Castle of the Rose" telling her that he would soon follow in company with the man whom he had selected for her husband.

Soon afterwards, the abbot of a monastery situated within his kingdom paid a visit to the king. With the abbot were other monks and a few armed retainers. Among the latter the King at once recognised his enemy Michael. On being questioned, the sub-prior Adrain related how he had found Michael wounded, how the boy had been healed, brought up and educated in the monastery.

He also told the King that since the boy showed no disposition to become a monk, he was taken into the Abbot's guard. To confirm his story the sub-prior then showed the knife that he had found sticking in Michael's side. The King, who listened to the story in silence and was considering how he might do away with his enemy, asked the Abbot to let Michael remain at his court and join the royal retinue. The Abbot readily complied with the request of the King. Ten days after this, the King summoned Michael into his presence.

"Well, Michael," said the King, "let us see if you are as faithful as you are handsome. I have a letter to send to the Seneschal at my Castle of the Rose. You must take it for me. No man must see the letter but the Seneschal himself. Be wise and wary then, and this day shall be the beginning of a glorious career for you."

Shortly afterwards the King gave Michael the letter, sealed with his royal seal, and the young man, richly attired, and mounted on a fine horse, set forth. Michael had a very pleasant journey and he passed through a beautiful country and at length reached the palace.

Hearing the hoofs of Michael's horse beat upon the causeway, the warder came out and asked his errand.

"I come from the King," said Michael. "See, here is his badge. I bear letters to my lord, the Seneschal."

"The Seneschal is feasting now," said the warder. "He will give heed to nothing until he has finished. Go you and wander in the pleasure. When my lord leaves the dining-hall I will not fail to come and tell you."

Michael thanked the warder, and, having found his way to the pleasure, or garden, lay down on the grass by the side of a fountain to rest. The musical sound of the falling water lulled him and soon the young man's head nodded, and he fell fast asleep.

Now, it happened that very afternoon, that the King's daughter, Cicely, who had grown to be a beautiful young woman, wandered into the pleasure with one of her maids. Presently they came to where the young man lay sleeping. At first sight of him the Princess knew that this was he who should be her suitor.

Then the curious maid drew forth a scroll from Michael's belt, and after reading it, handed it to the Princess. The letter was to

the effect that the bearer of it was to be immediately put to death by the Seneschal.

The colour faded from the Princess Cicely's face as she read these cruel words. Panting, she turned to her maid, and bade her wait by the side of the sleeping youth. "If no one comes nigh let him sleep on," she said, "but if he wakes, or if any danger threatens, hide him till I come again."

Then she turned and ran quickly to the palace. In great haste, for it was nearly time for the feast to come to an end, she passed into her father's room, and, from between the leaves of a great book, took a royal scroll, signed, sealed, but blank.

Upon this, with a hand that never trembled, she wrote to the effect that the bearer of it should be immediately married to the Princess.

Quickly the Princess returned to the yet sleeping youth, and thrust the scroll into his belt.

A few minutes afterwards the porter came, true to his promise, and, waking Michael, led him to the presence of the Seneschal. Sir Rafe read the King's letter with astonishment, but he had no choice to do as the King commanded.

So, that very day, Michael led his young bride to the altar.

Some days afterwards the King returned to his castle. As he drew near he heard the sound of music, and merry minstrelsy, and saw a gaily-dressed procession that came forth to meet him. In the midst walked Michael and Cicely, hand in hand.

Scowling and angry, the King reined in his horse and called to his Seneschal. "What is the meaning of all this?" he cried. "Did I not send this young man to you a week ago, with a letter?"

"Yea, Sire", answered Sir Rafe. "Therefore I married the two, as your letter commanded."

For a long time the King stood dumb. Then gradually a smile lighted up his face. He saw that in spite of himself his wicked designs had come to naught, and he could not help but feel glad that he was no longer at war with Fate.

"You did well", said he; "you have proved faithful in this as in all other things. From to-day men shall bear before you the banner of a duke."

Then he leaped down from his horse, and taking a hand of each of the lovers, gave them his blessing. And as he stood beside them on the flower-strewn way, regret for the past filled his heart,

and be said to himself: "What happy time might I have spent in this garden, what glorious victorious might I have won, what noble deeds performed what bliss enjoyed, what calmness, what satisfaction for a well-spent life,—if only I had left the future to take care of itself and attempted to govern the destinies of my kingdom, as if I were on all-wise God sitting in the midst of his angels."

So Michael became King, as had been foretold. And, in his time there was not in all the world a King so great and good.

## APPENDICES.

### APPENDIX I.

#### Obsolete Words and Phrases explained in the Notes,

(N.B.—*These words are not to be used by the student in English Composition.*)

The Arabic figures indicate the lines of the poem where the words occur.

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Adown, (down) l. 155.  | Distraught, (Distracted), 1359.    |
| Agone, (Ago).  | Dight, 478.                        |
| Afeared, (Afraid) l. 296, 1307.  | Dreariehead or Dreariehood, 422.   |
| Anear, (Near) l. 405.  | Down, (=hill), 63.                 |
| Anigh, (Nigh, near) 50.  | Damoiseau, 1616.                   |
| Aught, (Any thing), (used as a noun or an adverb).                             | Ert, 1253, 389.                    |
| Astonished, l. 257.  | Erne, (Eagle), 148.                |
| Aback, (Back), 103, 363.   | Enow, (Enough), 1025.              |
| Brake, (=Broken), 199. (Brake is still used in the sense of <i>thickets</i> .) | Faerie } 982.                      |
|  | Fay } 982.                         |
| Bede, (Prayer), l. 428.  | Forgat, (Forgot), 166.             |
| Bills, (=Axes), l. 2027.   | Fence, (=defence), 1242.           |
| Bushment, (Ambush), 129.   | Goodlihead, 1170.                  |
| Betide, l. 723.  | Gat, (got), 14.                    |
| Betwixt, (Between).  | Happed, 172.                       |
| By the rood, 1242.   | Horse-hooves, (Horse-hoofs), 1596. |
| Carle, l. 409.   | Hinds, (Farm labourers), 1460.     |
| Certes, l. 87.   | Hardihead, 1939.                   |
| Coats of fence, 1230.  | Hitherward, 1603.                  |
| (I) Can, (Have skill), 796.  | I trow (I trust), 1392.            |
| Clerkly skill, 1821.   | Kaiser, 1619.                      |
|  | Lief, (Dear), 1631.                |

Liker,* (More like), 59.	Stare, 855.
Leech, (=doctor), 1337.	Seneschal, 1413.
Maunds, (Baskets), 1463.	Since that, (=Since).
Mirk, (Dark), 975.	Shrive, 1334.
<i>Midst this</i> , 1124.	Scathe, (noun), 1930.
Mazed, (Confounded), 1076.	Soothly, (=truly).
Miscontent, 2036.	Thwart, (Athwart, across), 369.
Meseems, 2109.	Therewith, (Upon this ; saying this), 108, 947.
Nathless, 1091, 1159, 1292.	Therewithal, 1057, 1185, 1228.
Nought, (Nothing), 1358. (Used as a noun or as an adverb).	Trolls, 981.
Perdie, 1627.	'Twixt, 195.
Prentice, 812.	Twain, (two).
Pleasantice, 105, 1630.	Wildering, 302.
Rood, 1242.	Withal, 671, 787.

## APPENDIX II.

### Interesting Words and Phrases.

(Words in *Appendix I* are not included here).

The References are to the lines of the poem.

Abbey-close, 1369.	Crooning, 557.
Abbot, 1219.	Crucible, 1155.
Ark, 496.	Cornelian, 1848.
Ashen-handled, 1540.	Collar of thy king, 2137.
Arched crown, 771.	Dace, 780.
Black monks, 937.	Dais, 1958.
Bittern's boom, 1013.	Dances of the faerie, 982.
Bridle-hand, 534.	Equerry, 105.
Baily, 1483.	Elves, 1308.
Budget, (bag), 1625.	Fly, 847.
Bream, 846.	Fell, 1392.
Bracken, 286.	Falcon, 175.
Bier, 1619.	Glade, 405.
Barnaby,	Guise, 123.
Cardl, 1042.	Green-striped onions, 1542.
Carven saints, 1110.	Harbour, 375.
Close, 108.	Hedge-rows, 469.
Crabbed, 101.	Hart, 175.
Chub, 847.	Heathy, 147.

Holly, 343.	Spousal ring, 1925.
Junkets, 600.	Scathe, 1930.
Lore, 9.	Stark, 312.
Manchets, 1897.	Scroll, 760.
Muster, 840.	Signet, 1848.
Mill-tail, 733.	Staunched, 1333.
Mavis, (a kind of thrush).	Spruce ; spruce-wood, 966.
Michaelmas, 685.	Trestle, 334.
Minster choir, 1109.	Thymy, 63.
New-yeaned, 149.	Thrushes, 1453.
Old wife's tale, 977.	Tangled bed, 665.
Our Lady, 249.	Untold, 288.
Plover, 855.	Victual, 288.
Porridge, 437.	Verges, 2019.
Pipkin, 436.	Wood-cock, 851.
Panniers, 658.	White-coifed, 1462.
Point, 362.	Well-shod damsel, 1464.
Pleached, 1391.	Wizened, 25.
Pike, 848.	Wattled, 1326.
Plumb the moat, 144.	Wych-elm, 341.
Ranson of all Lands, 1301.	Wasp-bitten, 558.
Rye-bread, 245.	Wear my rose, 1368.
Roundel, 2049.	Yew-bresprinkled, 1484.
Snipe, 851.	Yeomen, 1460.
Staves, 1230.	Youngling, 666.
Stares or starlings.	

### APPENDIX III.

**N.B.**—References are to the lines of the poem.

*(Notes should be referred to on each point.)*

#### ALLUSIONS, etc.

(A) Historical Allusions :—

- (1) L. 1619. The Kaiser lieth on his bier ; and  
L. 1621. Valorous Red Beard.

(See notes on lines 1619 and 21).

- (2) Huge wood-cutters in raimant blue,  
The remnant of a mighty race,  
The ancient masters of the place.

This is an allusion to pre-historic people, inhabiting the forest, regarded by superstitious people, as fairies or goblins.

Modern archæology has unearthed the remains of some of these "*cave-dwellers*" in the earliest epochs of human history. Traces of them have been found in Great Britain, the coast of Biscay in Spain and in China.

For explanation, see notes on lines 978 to 985.

(B) Classical and Mythological Allusions :—

- (1) "*Like Erigone of old*", etc.

See note on l. 1149.

- (2) "As some goddess might have been,  
When Greek men worshipped many a queen".

(See notes on lines 1202, 1203.

- (3) "As goddesses in old time ate,  
Ere Helen was a Trojan queen".

See notes on lines 1899, 1900.

(C) Biblical allusions :—

- (1) *Paradise*, See l. 2146.

- (2) For in the fertile Asian land.  
Where great Damascus now doth } l. 2143 etc.  
stand etc.

- (3) Abraham, l. 1089.

- (4) Michael and the Dragon l. 666-67.

- (5) St. Peter l. 723.

- (6) Gates of Paradise, l. 1644.

- (7) Our Lady l. 249.

- (8) The Ransom of all Lands l. 1301.

(D) Words and phrases illustrative of the mediæval church :—

- (1) Barnaby the bright, l. 842.

- (2) Black friars l. 937 and 1565.

- (3) Verges l. 2019.

- (4) Abbot, l. 1219.

- (5) Sub-prior l. 1227.

- (6) By the rood, l. 1242.

- (7) Bear forth the bell, l. 1290.

- (9) The minster chir, l. 1109.

- (10) Carven saints, l. 1110.

- (11) Michaelmas, l. 685.

(E) Words and Phrases illustrating Feudal customs and institutions :—

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Seneschal, l. 1413.                        | (12) Damoiseau, l. 1616.            |
| (2) Moat l. 1444.                              | (13) A lion painted etc., l. 476.   |
| (3) Banner cut fursquare, l. 2127.             | (14) My rose, l. 1368.              |
| (4) Collar of an order of knighthood, l. 2127. | (15) Axe-men; men-at-arms, l. 1239. |
| (5) Equerry, l. 731.                           | (16) Warder l. 1646.                |
| (6) Squire, l. 453.                            | (17) Brought to bay, l. 175.        |
| (7) Knight, 2127 and 453.                      | (18) Bailly, l. 1483.               |
| (8) Earl Marshal, l. 127.                      | (19) Yeomen, l. 1460.               |
| (9) Chamberlain, l. 539.                       | (20) Scroll, l. 760.                |
| (10) Drawbridge, l. 1584.                      | (21) Roundel, l. 2049.              |
| (11) Minstrelsy, l. 2027.                      |                                     |

## APPENDIX IV.

### Test Questions.

I. (a) Give a brief description of the Sage who was present among the wise and learned men who attended the royal festival. ll. 24-70.

(b) What prophecy was made by the sage to the King regarding the next successor to his throne? Give the substance of the conversation between the sage and the King. ll. 74-152.

II. (a) What mysterious words did the King hear while he was asleep in the peasant's shed where he had taken night's shelter? l. 260; ll. 275; 291-94.

III. Where did the King see his heir for the first time? Describe in brief the King's adventure that threw into his possession his future heir. ll. 172-423.

IV. Why did the King take with him the peasant's newly born son? What did the King do with that child when he obtained him?

V. Give a short account of the second attempt made by the King to kill the peasant boy who was to succeed him to his throne. ll. 718-1079.

VI. (a) Describe in brief the occupations and amusements of Michael in his boyhood till he was fourteen. ll. 835-56.

(b) What impression did the boy Michael make upon the King's squire who had come to take him away? ll. 733-832.



VII. Give a short description of Michael's journey in the company of the King's squire. ll. 909-1070.

VIII. What trick did the King's squire employ in order to kill Michael? ll. 1024-79.

IX. Describe in brief the part which Samuel plays in the story. How did he die? ll. 404-8; ll. 450-524; ll. 718-1110.

X. How was Michael rescued a second time from the King's attempt to kill him? ll. 1210-1358.

XI. Describe in brief the meeting between the King and Michael after the latter's escape from death for the second time. ll. 1250-1416.

XII. Give a short account of Michael's journey to the Castle of Rose. ll. 1419-1608.

XIII. Give a brief account of the third attempt made by the King so kill his next heir. ll. 1359-1416.

XIV. Give a brief account of the adventures which Michael passed through ever since the time he appeared at the gate of the Castle of Rose. ll. 1596-2196.

XV. Narrate in brief the conversation between the warder of the Castle and Michael. ll. 1600-1659.

XVI. What part does Agnes play in the story? Summarise in brief the conversation between the Princess and her Agnes. ll. 1689-1941.

XVII. Give a brief history of Michael's life from his birth to the day when he became King. Mention the chief traits in his character.

XVIII. Give a brief account of the life of the heroine of the poem.

XIX. Say in a few words what you know about :

(a) The Miller in the poem.

(b) The Sub-prior Adrian,

(c) The scroll and the knife tied round the neck of Michael.

(d) 'The pleasance of the ancient queen.'

(e) The old sage who made the prophecy about the King's next heir.

XX. What moral lesson can you draw from the story of "The Man Born to be King." See Introduction, Section III (3).

XXI. Write a short note on the merits of the poem, the poet's style and his power of vivid description. See Introduction, Section III, (8) (9).

XXII. Write in brief the main incidents in the story of "The Man Born to be King." Refer to the Introduction, Section III (4). What is the chief sources of the story? See Introduction, Section III (5) (6).

XXIII. Give two examples of (1) Metaphor, ll. 1155-58; l. 1957 (2) Simile, l. 28; l. 1183 (3) Metonymy. l. 123; l. 1368. (4) Euphemism, ll. 293-4; 1109. (5) Aposiopesis, 1930.

XXIV. Answer in brief the following questions:—

- (1) What is the significance of the Porter's song, "The Kaiser lieth on the bier"? See notes to l. 1619.
- (2) Why was the princess sent to the Castle of Rose? ll. 1165-68.
- (3) What were the dreams of the boy Michael before he attained the kingly state? ll. 818-28.

XXV. Explain clearly:—

- (1) Along the hard and doubtful.....grave. ll. 55-56.
- (2) Take thou, nor struggle.....set. ll. 117-18.  
And drank swift death in guise of wine. l. 123.
- (3) Take, or give up; what matters it? l. 291.
- (4) .....who had no heed.....bleed. ll. 318-19.
- (5) Their green coats lessening as they went. l. 465.
- (6) Just told of by the dust-cloud.....slim. ll. 470-71.
- (7) A lion painted hastily.....palisade. ll. 476-79.
- (8) Then if mine old line.....will. ll. 498-99.
- (9) Unto some Michael.....minster wall. ll. 606-7.
- (10) Grey eyes, firm lips.....his sin. ll. 645-6.
- (11) Who yet lived, gathering wage for hell. ll. 720.
- (12) Watching the wift stream.....careless dace. ll. 734-5.
- (13) Witte green leaves.....cometh back. ll. 759-62.
- (14) Of how the nibbling.....bait. l. 780-81.
- (15) Made strange.....was to be l. 826-7.
- (16) To join the muster.....market towm. ll. 840-44.
- (17) .....for doubt not ought.....might lie. ll. 1087-89.
- (18) .....and within the minster.....to keep. ll. 1108-10.
- (19) On like Erigone of old.....face of hers- ll. 1149-52.
- (20) Their crimes forgotton.....golden gain. ll. 1154-58.
- (21) But as some goddess might have been.....queen.  
ll. 1202-3.
- (22) Love gilded not the waiping morn. l. 1207.

- (23) The beasts were glad that news to know. l. 1293.  
 (24) Ridding him note whom.....Lands. ll. 1200-1.  
 (25) He shall serve God.....voice l. 1349-50.  
 (26) For better had he wear my rose.....Abbey-closer  
 ll. 1368-9.  
 (27) .....nor should ladies miss.....as this. ll. 1374-5.  
 (28) And backward still the wrath.....fellow said. ll. 1432-4.  
 (28) Thou dost not at my lady stare.....thy throat. ll. 1443-45.  
 (29) And white-coifed house wives.....maunds. ll. 1462-2.  
 (30) The tending of the kind old man.....Dominican.  
 ll. 1564-5.  
 (31) This mighty horse and rich array.....unknown way-  
 ll. 1570-1.  
 (32) And nigh him a great golden carp.....done. ll. 1511-2.  
 (33) For these red towers above the green.....them lies.  
 ll. 1643-45.  
 (34) A maid full fain would live and die.....queen.  
 ll. 1733-4.  
 (35) As love drew near those eyes to meet.....sweet hours.  
 ll. 1745-6.  
 (36) Few words are best, be wise, be wise!  
 (37) Scarce fresher than.....to clutch. ll. 1877-8.  
 (38) As goddesses in old time ate.....Trojan queen.  
 1899-1939.  
 (39) Let love slay fear.....count them. ll. 1910-15.  
 (40) For fear that love some monster feigned.....wretchedly.  
 ll. 1955-57.  
 (41) And there beheld her love.....serving weed. ll. 1960-1.  
 (42) My life will hammer from the twain.....chainy  
 ll. 1970-10.  
 (43) And every word did he forget.....glad ears. ll. 1973-76.  
 (44) If he could know, if he could know.....should be.  
 ll. 2025-6.  
 (45) The crushing of that Sage's lore.....fate. ll. 2065-66.  
 (46) I will hold my peace.....still increase. ll. 2082-83.  
 (47) What play is this ye play to me? l. 2103.  
 (48) If I had let these things.....cherubim. ll. 2168-70.  
 (49) When scarce a man.....the ways.\* ll. 2194-5.
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